



THE
CHRISTIANS
PATTERN,
or
The Imitation
of
CHRIST.

Printed by I. Redmayne for John Clarke
at Mercers Chappell in Cheap side. 1664.



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For THE *Ihem*
CHRISTIANS
PATTERN;

Or
A DIVINE TREATISE
Of the
IMITATION
of
CHRIST.

Written Originally in Latine, by
THOMAS à KEMPIS,
above 200. Years since.



L O N D O N,

Printed by J. Redmayne, and are to
be sold by Iohn Clark, at Mercers
Chappel in Cheap-side, 1664.



TO THE *of*
R E A D E R.

Amongst the many Considerations which clearly evince the great Worth and special Excellencies of this divine Treatise, such as These would not be remembered.

That it hath been translated into very many languages, viz. Greek, Italian, French, Spanish, Dutch, English, &c. Some Travellers affirm they have seen it also in the Turkish language. And in most of these languages, as well as in the Latine in which originally it was written, it hath been very often printed; Scarce hath any other Practicall and Devotional Discourse been published oftener; And that with so general an approbation and acceptance; This golden Manual having had the singular happiness and priviledge to be kindly entertain'd by Christians of different denominations.

But that which doth fully speak the true Worth and Excellency of it,

To the Reader.

is the main Designe and Scope, the Matter and Argument of the Book, being indeed the same with the Intendment and Designe of the Gospel, the Scope and End of Christianity, which in short is The being transformed into the Image of Christ, or, in our Author's language, the Imitation or Following of Christ in Humility, Patience, Benignity and Goodnesse, entire Self-resignation to the will of God, &c. In these and the like particulars doth the Author place our Resemblance of Christ, which yet are not here spoken to in a formal Method, but are scattered through this Treatise, yet so as to be easily observed by a serious Reader.

Now there is nothing more precious, more dear to God than his own Image, his own Life, from the which Wicked men are said to be estranged, Ephes. 4. And there is nothing higher, nothing more excellens than the Participation of the Divine Nature, then the Resemblance of God who is the first and Supreme Excellency, than the Imitation

To the Reader.

tation of Christ who is the highest, the most perfect and lovely Pattern and Ilica of all purity and holynesse. Besides there is nothing more essential to the constituting of a true Christian, then the denying of himself, the taking up of his Cross, and following of Christ.

All along in this Treatise there are to be found the seeds and principles of the most necessary and Practicall Truths, together with many inward and experimental discoveries of the Kingdome of God in us, and the Proesse of Regeneration: so that a serious Christian may meet with that which will be very proper and suitable to him to consider and make use of, in the severall exercises of his Christian warfare. The truth of this is faithfully witnessed to by many religious and holy Souls, who have profest that in the reading of this Spiritual Book they have found that which hath been (through the goodness of God) very profitable to direct and instruct, to revive and comfort, to strengthen and establish them in their present state and Condition: The

To the Reader.

The Author of this Treatise was a serious and diligent Observer of the Kingdome of God within him, and speaks of the inward things of Religion, as one that did carefully mind the power and Energy of Truth in his own soul.

And now what remains, but to adde humble & hearty desires to the God of all grace, the Father of lights, that he would prepare good & honest hearts for the receiving of those Truths which so mainly concern Life and Godly-ness: and that it may please him so to prosper what is here written of the true Imitation of Christ, as that they that read, may be formed into the likeness of Christ and follow his steps; that being in the world as He was in the world, and being changed into his image from glory to glory, They may at last be with him where he is, and behold the glory which God hath given him, and so for ever be with the Lord.

To the Reader.



Christianity is the life
of the soul, and Me-
ditation is the life of
Christianity: a pious
man hath alwayes
God within him, but he onely
that meditateth findeth him there:
every religious soul affordeth
God a lodging, but he onely
that meditateth conferreth with
him and giveth the entertain-
ment. Now therefore if thou de-
sirest to talk with God, and enter
a daily Dialogue with thy Crea-
tour, read this Book, here is con-
ference upon all occasions: reade
this Authour, so well approved of,
that he now by so many seve-
rall Translations speaketh more
tongues, then ever spake Christ: for
he is translated into the Turkish;
you see what virtue the merit of
this work carrieth with it, when
the Imitation of Christ shall be
ptized by Christs enemies, A Mer-

chant going to Algiers in Mauritania to redeem some captives from their miserable slavery, found this Authour translated, and by the King wonderfully enriched with pearls, and kept (as he saith) in a more glorious Cabinet then ever Alexander kept his Homer in: sure the power of his worth must needs be great, that it could force a petty King to vanquish the Monarch of the world. Reader, in brief, take this Thomas à Kempis, dead, yet still a learner of new languages; this blessed and unconfused Babel, who buildeth men not stones up to heaven. Take this Follower of Christ; thy example; Gods familiar friend and acquaintance; who whilst he lived on earth, I say not, He dwelt in Heaven, but more, Heaven it self, nay God dwelt in Him.

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THE

I
THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the imitation of Christ, and contempt of all worldly vanities.



He that followeth me, walketh not in darknesse, faith our Lord. These are the words of Christ, by which we are admonished, that we ought to imitate his life and manners, if we will be partakers of his Divine light, and be delivered from all blindnesse of heart. Let therefore our chiefest care be to meditate upon the life of Jesus Christ.

2. The doctrine of Christ exceedeth all humane doctrine, and he that hath the light of the Spirit, will discover therein a secret and hidden Manna. But it falleth out, that many, who often hear the Gospel of Christ, do yet feel in themselves but slender motion of any holy desire, because they
are

are void of the spirit of Christ. But whosoever will fully & feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavour to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, & thereby displeasing to the Trinity! High words surely make a man neither holy nor just, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel compunction, then understand the definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible by heart, and the sayings of all the Philosophers, what would all that profit thee without charity and the grace of God? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but onely to love God, and wholly to serve him. This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the kingdom of heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after fading riches, and to repose
trust

trust in them. It is also vanity to gape after honours, and to climb to high degree. It is vanity to follow the appetite of the flesh, and to labour for that, for which thou maist afterwards suffer more grievous punishment. Vanity it is to wish to live long, and to be careless to live well. It is vanity to mind onely this present life, and not to foresee those things which are to come. It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither where everlasting joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind this proverb, That the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy heart from the affection of visible things, and to turn thy self to the invisible. For they that follow their sensuality, do stain their own consciences, and lose the grace of God.

CHAP. II.

Of the humble conceit of our selves.

ALL men by nature desire to know: but what availeth knowledge without the fear of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that feareth God, is better then a proud Philosopher that neglecting himself laboureth to understand the course of the heavens. Who so knoweth himself well, groweth daily more contemptible in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of men. If I understood all that is to be known in the world & were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds.

2. Give not thy self to inordinate desire of knowledge, for therein is much distraction & deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to others, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul: and he
is

is very unwise that bestoweth his labour about other things then those that may avail him for the health of his soul. Many words do not satisfie the desires of the heart: but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou knowest, and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unlesse thy life be also more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science which thou knowest: but rather let the knowledge given thee make thee more faithfull. If thou thinkest that thou understandest and knowest much; know also that there be many things more which thou knowest not. Think not too well of thy self, but rather confesse thine ignorance. Why wilt thou preferre thy self before others, sith there be

ma-

many more learned and skilfull then thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitable, desire not to be known, and to be little esteemed of by man.

4. The highest and most profitable reading is the true knowledge and consideration of our selves. It is great wisdom and perfection to esteem nothing of our selves, and to think alwayes well and commendably of others. If thou shouldst see another openly sinne, or commit any hainous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteem the better of thy self: for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remain in good estate. We are all frail, but thou oughtest to esteeme none more frail then thy self.

CHAP. III,

Of the doctrine of Truth.

HAPPY is he whom Truth by it self doth teach, not by figures and voices that passe away; but as it is in it self. Our own opinion
and

and sense do often deceive us, and it discerns little. What availeth it to dispute and contend about dark and hidden things ; whereas for being ignorant of them we shall not so much as once be reprehended at the day of judgement? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and necessary , and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtfull : we have eyes and see not.

2. And what have we to do with the terms and distinctions of Logicians ? He to whom the Eternall Word speaketh is delivered from multitudes and diversities of opinions. By that one Word all things do speak, and all declare the same: and this is the beginning , and that which speaketh unto us. No man without that Word understandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, and seeth all things in one , may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, thy eternal Truth
makes

makes me one with thee in everlasting charity. It is tedious to me often to reade and hear many things. In thee is all that I would have and can desire. Let all Doctours hold their peace; let all creatures be silent in thy sight: speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is retired within himself, and becometh inwardly sincere, and pure, so much the more and higher mysteries doth he understand without labour: for that he receiveth light of understanding from above. A pure, sincere, & staid spirit is not distracted, though it be employed in many works: for that it works all to the honour of God, and labours for inward tranquillity, without seeking it self in any thing it doth. VVho hinders and troubles thee more then the unmortified desires of thine own heart? A good and godly man first of all disposeth in himself his outward works: neither do they draw
him

him to the desires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them to the prescript of reason. Who hath a greater combat, then he that laboureth to overcome himself? This ought to be our endeavour, to conquer our selves daily, to wax stronger, and be more able to subdue our passions, and alwayes in this way to get some ground.

4. All perfection in this hath some imperfections mixt with it: and no knowledge of ours is void of darknesse and ignorance. An humble knowledge of thy self is a more secure way to God, then a deep search after learning: yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the onely knowledge of any thing whatsoever is to be disliked, it being good in it self & ordained by God; but a good conscience and a virtuous life is to be preferred before it. And for that many endeavour rather to get knowledge, then to live well; therefore they

are often deceived, and reap either none or very slender profit of their labours.

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, and planting of virtues, as they do in moving doubts and questions ! neither would there so much hurt be done, nor so great scandall be given in the world, nor so much loosenesse be practised in places erected for virtue. Truly at the day of judgement we shall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done : not how well we have spoken, but how virtuously we have lived. Tell me now, where are all those great Doctours and Masters with whom thou wast well acquainted, whilst they lived and flourished in learning ? Now others possesse their livings, and perhaps do scarce ever think of them. In their life time they seemed something, but now they are not spoken of.

6. O,

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of this world pass away! Would God their life had been answerable to their learning, then had their study and reading been to good purpose. How many perish in this world by reason of vain learning, who take little care of the service of God? And because they rather choose to be great than humble, therefore they vanish away in their vain imaginations. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is truly great that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of the height of honour. He is truly wise, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned, that fulfilleth the will of Christ, and forsaketh his own.

CHAP. IV.

*Of wisdom and providence in
our actions.*

WE must not give ear to every suggestion or instinct, but
B ought

ought warily and leifurely to ponder things according to the will of God. But (alas!) such is our weaknesse that we rather often believe, and speak evil of others then good. Those that are perfectly virtuous do not easily give credit to every thing that is told them: for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very subject to fail in words.

2. It is great wisdome not to be rash in thy proceedings, nor to stand stiffely in thine own conceits; as also not to believe every thing which thou hearest, nor presently to relate again to others, what thou hast heard or dost believe. Consult with him that is wise, & of a good conscience, and seek to be instructed by a better then thy self, rather then to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a man wise according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. How much the humbler one is in himself, and

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more subject and resigned unto God; so much the more prudent shall he be in all his affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet of heart.

CHAP. V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in holy Scripture. Each part of it is to be read with the same spirit it was made. We should rather search after spiritual profit in Scriptures, than subtilty of speech. We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as high and learned. Let not the reputation of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or small learning; but let the pure word of truth move thee to read. Search not who spake this or that, but mark what is spoken.

2. Men passe away; but the truth of our Lord remaineth for ever. God speaks unto us sundry ways, without respect of persons. Our

own curiosity oftē hindereth us in reading of the Scriptures, when as we will examine and discusse that which we should rather passe over without more ado. If thou desire to reap profit, reade humbly, plainly, and faithfully: never desire the estimation of learning. Inquire willingly, and hear with silence the words of holy men: dislike not the parables of Elders, for they are not recounted without cause.

CHAP. VI.

Of inordinate desires, and affections.

WHENsoever a man desireth any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself, The proud and covetous can never rest. The poor and humble in spirit live together in all peace. The man that hath not wholly subdued himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in spirit, and he that is yet in a manner sub-

subject to his appetires, and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to retire himself from them: and easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2 And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of conscience; for that he yielded to his passion which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quiet of mind therefore, is gotten by resisting our passions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnal man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spiritual and fervent.

CHAP. VII.

Of flying vain hope and pride.

HE is vain that putteth his trust in men or creatures. Be not a-

shamed to serve others for the love of Jesus Christ; nor to be esteemed poor in this world. Presume not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thee. Trust not in thine own knowledge, nor in the wisdom or prudence of any living creature: but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth the presumptuous and proud.

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in the power of thy friends; but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extoll not thy self for the stature and beauty of thy body, which is dissolved and disfigured with every little sickness. Take not pleasure in thy natural gifts or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever nature hath given thee.

3. Esteem not thy self better
then

then others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse then they. Be not proud of welldoing: for the judgements of God are far different from the judgements of men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou maist the better keep within thy heart the precious treasure of humility. It is no prejudice unto thee to esteem thy self worse then all the world: but it hurteth thee very much to preferre thy self before any one. The humble enjoy continual peace: but in the heart of the proud is envy and indignation.

CHAP. VIII.

That too much familiarity is to be shunned.

LAy not thy heart open to every one; but treat of thy affairs with the wise & such as fear God. Converse not much with young
B 4 people

people and strangers. Flatter not the rich ; neither do thou appear willingly before great personages. Keep company with the humble, simple, devout, and virtuous; and confer with them of those things that may edifie. Be not familiar with any woman but in generall commend all good women to God. Desire to be familiar with God alone and his Angels , and flie the knowledge of men.

2. We must have charity towards all, but familiarity with all is not expedient. Sometime it falleth out , that the fame of some person that is unknown , is much esteemed; whose presēce notwithstanding is not gratefull to the eyes of the beholders. We think sometime to please others by our company , and we rather distaste them with our disordered manners, and the evil customes which they discover in us.

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CHAP. IX.

Of obedience and subjection.

IT is a great matter to live in obedience, to be under a superiour, and not to be at our own disposing. It is much safer to obey, then to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for necessity then for charity: such are discontented, and do easily repine and murmur. Neither can they attain to freedom of mind, unlesse they willingly and heartily put themselves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest but in humble subjection under the government of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own sense and liking; and is apt to affect those most that are of his own mind: But if God be amongst us, we must leave our own judgement, that so peace and

quietnesse may be the better preserved. Who is so wise that he can fully know all things? Trust not therefore to thine own conceits; but be willing to hear the judgement of others. If that which thou thinkest be good, and notwithstanding thou forsakest it for God, and followest the opinion of another, it shall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is more secure to hear and take counsel, then to give it. It may also fall out, that each ones opinion may be good: but to refuse to yield to others when as reason or cause requireth it, is a token of willfullnesse and pride.

CHAP. X.

*Of the avoiding superfluity
in words.*

FLY the unquietnesse of men, as much as thou canst: for the talk of worldly affairs hindereth very much, although they be recounted with sincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, and as
it

it were enthralled with vanity. I could wish that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have spoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we so willingly speak and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldom return to silence without hurt of conscience? The cause why we so willingly talk, is for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another; and desire to ease our mind unwearied with sundry thoughts: and we talk willingly, and think of those things which we love best, and most desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesome unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end: for this outward comfort is the cause of no small losse of inward & divine consolation. Therefore we must watch & pray, lest our time passe without any fruit or profit. If it be lawfull and expedient for thee to speak,
speak

ſpeak thoſe things that may edifie. An evil cuſtome and neglect of our own good doth give too much libertie to inconfiderate ſpeech : Yet devout diſcourſes of heavenly things do greatly further our progreſſe in ſpirit , eſpecially where perſons of one mind and ſpirit be gathered together in God.

CHAP. XI.

*Of the obtaining of peace , and zeal
of ſpiritual profit.*

WE might enjoy peace , if we would not buſie our ſelves with the words and deeds of other men which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace , that thruſteth himſelf into the cares of others , or that little or ſeldome recollecteth himſelf within his own breaſt ? Blessed are the ſimple and pure minds ; for they ſhall enjoy much peace.

2. What is the reaſon, why ſome of the Saints were ſo perfect and contemplative ? Because they laboured

boured to mortifie themselves wholly to earthly desires: and therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and freely attend to their own affairs. We are too much lead by our own passions, and too solicitous for transitory things. We also seldome overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to profit in spirit: and therefore we remain cold in devotion, and scarce warm in religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto our selves, & not entangled within our own breasts; then we might also have some taste of divine things, and feel the sweetness of heavenly contemplation. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not free from our passions, and disordered inclinations; neither do we endeavour to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked be-

before us : and when any small adversity befallerh us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we endeavoured like men of courage to stand continually in the battel ; surely we should feel the favourable assistance of God from heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to succour those that fight manfully, and do trust in his grace. If we esteem our progresse in religious life, to consist onely in these exterior observations, our devotion will quickly be at an end. Let us lay the ax to the root, that being freed from passions, we may find rest to our souls.

5. If every year we would root out one vice, we should quickly become perfect men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goeth contrary, and that we were better and of a more pure conscience at the beginning of our conversion, then

then after many years of our profession. Our fervour and profit should increase daily ; but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but some part of his first spirit. If we would use but a little violence in the beginning, then should we be able to perform all things afterwards with ease and joy of heart.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accustomed, but harder to do against our own wills. But if thou dost not overcome little and easie things , how wilt thou overcome harder matters? Resist thy inclination in the first motions , and break off evil customes , lest perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didst consider how much inward peace unto thy self, and joy unto others thou shouldest procure by demeaning thy self well , I suppose thou wouldest be more carefull of thy spiritual profit.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of the profit of adversity,

IT is good that we have sometimes grief and adversities : for they often make a man enter into himself, and remember that he is here in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or hard conceit had of us : and this, although we do and intend well. These things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain glory : for then we chiefly seek God for our inward witnesse, when outwardly we be contemned by men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a man should settle himself so fully in God, that he needed not to seek many comforts of men. When a good and virtuous man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts ; then he understandeth better the
great

great need he hath of Gods assistance, without whose help he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then also he sorroweth, lamenteth, and prayeth for the miseries he suffereth. Then he is weary of living longer, and wisheth that death would come, that he might be dissolved and be with Christ. Then also he well perceiveth, that complete security and perfect peace cannot be had in this world.

CHAP. XIII.

Of resisting temptations.

SO long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in Job, Temptation is the life of man upon earth. Every one therefore ought to be carefull, & diligently to arm himself with prayer against his temptations, lest the devil find time and place to deceive him; who never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No man is so
per-

perfect and holy , but hath sometimes temptations:and we cannot be altogether free from them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to men , though they be troublesome and grievous : for in them man is humbled , purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations ; and they that could not bear temptations , became reprobate and fell from God. There is no order so holy , nor place so secret , where there be not temptations or adversities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temptations whilst he liveth on earth : for in our selves is the cause thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh; & we shall ever have something to suffer, because we have lost that innocency with which we were created. Many seek to flie
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temptations, & do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience & true humility we become stronger then all our enemies.

4. He that onely avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots, shall profit little: yea temptation will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case then before. By little and little, & by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome, then with violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations: and deal not roughly with him that it tempted; but give him comfort, as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ship without a stern is tossed to & fro with the waves: so the man that is negligent, and
leaveth

leaveth his purpose is many wayes tempted. Fire trieth iron & temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, Withstand the beginnings, for an after remedie comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind an evill thought, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight & an evil motion, and then consent: and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth full entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, so much the weaker doth he become daily, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the states and deserts of men, and ordaineth all things for the saving of his elect and chosen servants.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulation; who surely according to the saying of S. Paul will make with the temptatiō such issue, that we may be able to sustain it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations: for he will save and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions man is proved how much he hath.

hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater before God, & his virtues do more openly appear. Neither is it any great matter if a man be devout & fervent, when he seeleth no heavinesse: but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope of great good. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occurre; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who in so small things do see themselves so weak.

CHAP. XIV.

Of avoiding rash judgement.

TURN thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judge not rashly the deeds of other men. In judging of others a man alwayes labourerh in vain, often erreth, & quickly sinneth; but in judging & discussing of himself, he alwayes laboureth fruitfully. We often judge of things according to our

own

own desires : for private affection bereaves us easily of true judgement. If God were alwayes the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled with the repugnance of our sensuality.

2. But oftentimes some inward secret inclinatioⁿ, or outward affection occurreth, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion ; but if it succeed otherwise thē they desire, they are straight-way troubled, and much afflicted. The diversities of judgements and opinions, cause oftentimes dissensions between religious and devout persons.

3. An old custome is hardly broken, and no man is willingly lead further thē himself liketh. If thou dost more rely upon thine own reason or industry, then upon the
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virtue of obedience to Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou be illuminated with grace : for Almighty God will have us perfectly subject unto him, and that being inflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

CHAP. XV.

Of works done of Charity.

FOR no worldly thing, nor for the love of any man, is any evil to be done : but yet for the profit of one that standeth in need, a good work is sometimes to be left off, or changed also for a better. For by doing this, a good work is not lost, but changed into a better. The exterior work without charity profiteth nothing ; but whatsoever is done of charity, be it never so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, it is fruitfull and of great esteem in the sight of God. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, then how

much

much he doeth. He doeth much that loveth much.

2. He doeth much that doeth a thing well, he doeth well that rather serveth the common good of others, then his own will. Oftentimes it seemeth to be charity, & it is rather carnality: because natural inclination, self-will, hope of reward, and desire of our own commodity will seldom be wanting.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but onely desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted. He also envieth none; because he loveth no private good: neither will he rejoyce in himself, but wisheth above all things to enjoy God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the fountain all things proceed; in whom finally all Saints have perfect rest by fruition of his glory. O, he that had one spark, of perfect charity, how easily

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would

would he discern that all earthly things be full of vanity !

CHAP. XVI.

*Of bearing with the defects
of others.*

THose things that a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, untill God ordain otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy triall and patience, without which all our good deeds are not much to be esteemed. Thou oughtest to pray, notwithstanding when thou hast such impediments, that God would vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned doth not amend, contend not with him ; but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honoured in all his servants, who knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defect and infirmities of others, for that thy self also hast many things which

which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy self such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking? We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others severely corrected, and will not be corrected our selves. The large liberty of others displeaseth us: and yet we will not have our desires denied us. We will have others kept under by rigorous laws; but in no sort will our selves be restrained. And thus it appeareth, how seldom we weigh our neighbour in the same ballance with our selves. If all men were perfect, what should we have to suffer of our neighbour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordained, that we may learn to bear one anothers burden: for no man is without defect, no man without burden, no man sufficient of him-

self, no man endued with so much wisdom as he needeth; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish one another. Adversity best discovereth how great virtue each one hath: for occasions make not a man frail, but do shew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.

Of religious life.

THOU must learn to break thy own will in many things, if thou wilt have peace and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwell in community, or in a congregation, and to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully untill death. Blessed is he that hath there lived well, and ended happily. If thou wilt persevere in grace as thou oughtest, and profit in virtue, esteem thy self as a banished man, and a pilgrime upon earth. Thou must be contented for the love of Christ to be esteemed as a fool in this

this world, if thou desire to lead a virtuous and perfect religious life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, and shaving of the crown do little profit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of passions make a true religiousman. He that seeketh any thing else but God, and the health of his soul, shall find nothing but tribulation and sorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that laboureth not to be in the meanest place, and subject to all.

3. Thou camest to serve, not to be served. Know that thou wast called to suffer and to labour, not to be idle, or to spend thy time in talk. Here in the school of Christ men are proved as gold in the furnace. Here no man can stand, unless he humble himself with his whole heart for the love of God.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the examples of the holy Fathers.

CONSIDER the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these dayes. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and friends of Christ served our Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakednesse, in labour and wearinesse, in watching and fasting, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproaches.

2. O, how many & grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavoured to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possesse their souls in everlasting life. O how strait and poor a life led those holy Fathers in the wildernesse! How long and grievous tentations suffered they!

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How often & how grievously were they assaulted by their ghostly enemy! How fervent prayers offered they daily to God! How rigorous abstinence did they use! How fervent zeal & care had they of their spiritual profit! How strong and continual a combat had they for the overcoming of vices! How pure and upright intention kept they unto God! In the day they laboured, and in the night they attended to continual prayer, although when they laboured also they ceased not from mental prayer.

3. They spent all! their time with profit: every hour seemed short for the service of God, and for the great sweetnesse they had in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporal refection. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kinsfolks; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved to serve

their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things, but rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were replenished with grace and spiritual comfort.

4. They were strangers in the world, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing and abject to this world; but they were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in charity and patience, and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in God's sight. They were given for an example and pattern of perfection in Gods Church, and their example should more stirre us up to a desire of our spirituall profit, then the number of the lukewarm and dissolute livers draw us to the neglect thereof.

5. O how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the beginning

ginning of their holy institution ! How great was their devotion to prayer ! How diligent emulation of virtue ! How exact discipline flourished ! How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things ! Their footsteps yet remaining do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men ; who fighting so valiantly trode the world under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that breaketh not the rule, and that can with patience endure that which he hath professed.

6. O coldnesse and negligence of our time, that we so quickly decline from our first fervour, and are come to that passe, that very sloth and coldnesse of spirit maketh our own life tedious untous. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the holy examples of devout and religious souls.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the exercise of a good and religious person.

THe life of a religious person ought to shine with all virtues: that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, then is perceived without: for God beholdeth the heart, whom we ought most highly to reverence wheresoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight; & to renew daily our purposes, and stirre up our selves to fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion, and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly: for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpose shall be the successe of our profit: and much diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he
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that firmly purposeth often faileth, what shall he do that seldome purposeth any thing, or with little certainty? It may fall out sundry wayes that we leave off our good intents, and the least omission of spiritual exercises bringeth no little hinderance to our souls. The determinations of the just depend upon Gods grace, and not upon their own wisdom; upon whom they alwayes rely for whatsoever they take in hand. For man doth purpose, but God doth dispose, neither is the way of man in his own hands.

3. In usual exercise be sometimes omitted either for piety towards God, or profit to my neighbour, it may easily afterwards be recovered again. But if out of a slothful mind or carelesse negligence we forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and very prejudicial to our selves. Let us do the best we can we shall fail in many things, yet let us always take
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some certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into and set in order both the outward and the inward man, because both of them are very necessary to our coming forward in godlinesse.

4. If thou canst not continually call thy self to an account, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning consider what thou intendest to do, and at night examine thy self what thou hast done. How thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbour. Gird thy loyns like a man against the vile assaults of the devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating,

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or endeavouring something for the publick good. As for bodily exercises they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practised of all men alike.

5. The exercises that are not common are not to be exposed to publick view; for things private are practised more safely at home. Nevertheless thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for private occasions. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the diversity of times also divers exercises are fitting. Some sute better with us on working dayes, other on holy-dayes: some we have need of in temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietnesse: Soe we mind when

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we are pensive, and other some, when we rejoyce in the Lord.

6. When chief festivals draw near, good exercises are to be renewed, & the prayers of holy men more fervently to be implored. From feast to feast we should think thus with our selves, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to be made partakers of that everlasting feast in heaven. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our selves against such holy times, and lead our conversation so strictly as though we were shortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labours.

7. But if our departure be deferred, let us think with our selves that we are not sufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of so great glory which shall be revealed to us in due time, and let us endeavour to prepare our selves more diligently to our end. Blessed is that servant (saith S. Luke the Evangelist) whom when his Lord cometh
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he shall find him watching ; verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

CHAP. XX.

of the love of solitude and silence.

SEEK for an apt and convenient time to be at leasure to thy self, and meditate often upon Gods benefits and blessings. Meddle not with curiosities, but peruse such matter which may rather yield compunction to thy heart, then information to thy head. If thou wilt withdraw thy self from speaking vainly and from gaddidg idely, as also from hearkening after novelties and rumours, thou shalt find leisure sufficient and convenient enough to meditate on good things. The greatest and best of Gods Saints avoided the society of men when they could conveniently, & did rather choose to live secretly, & set themselves apart unto God.

2. One said, As oft as I have been among men, I returned home lesse a man then I was before; and
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this we find true when we talk long together. It is easier not to speak a word at all, then not to speak more words then we should. It is easier for a man to keep home, then to keep himself well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to increase in the spirit and inner man, must with Jesus depart from the multitude and presse of people. No man safely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home: no man speaks securely but he that holds his peace willingly. No man ruleth safely but he that is ruled willingly: no man securely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man rejoyceth securely, unlesse he hath the testimony of a good consciēce; yet the security of the Saints was alwayes full of the fear of God. Neither did those eminent gifts & excellent graces that were in them, make them more haughty, but more humble. But the

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upon heavenly things, and would place all his hope and confidence in God!

5. No man is worthy of heavenly comfort, unlesse he have diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy closet, and shut out all worldly tumult, as it is written, Examine your own hearts upon your beds, and be still. In thy closet thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt often lose; the more thou visitest thy closet, the more thou wilt like it; the lesse thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loath it. If in the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and in quietnesse a devout soul maketh herself perfect, and learneth the secrets and mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth floods of tears wherein she

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she may every night wash and cleanse her self, that she may be so much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much the farther off she liveth from all worldly disquiet. Who so therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God and his holy Angels will draw near unto him. It is better to live privately and to have regard to himself, then to neglect himself and his own salvation, though he could work miracles. It is very commendable in a religious person seldome to go abroad, to be unwilling either to see or be seen.

7. Why art thou willing and desirous to see that which is unlawful for thee to have and enjoy? for the world passeth away and the lusts thereof. Our sensual desires draw us to rove abroad, but when the pleasure is past, what carriest thou home with thee, but a grieved conscience and distracted mind? A merry going out bringeth commonly

monly a mournful return home; and a joyful evening makes many times a sad morning. So all carnall joy hath a pleasant entrance, but in the end it biteth like an Adder, and stings like a cockatrice. What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou canst not see here? behold here are Heaven and Earth and all the Elements; for of these are all things created.

8. What canst thou see any where that can long continue under the sun? thou thinkest perchance to satiate thy self and have thy fill, but thou shalt never attain it. Shouldst thou see all things present before thine eyes, it were but a vain and unprofitable sight: lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray him to pardon all thy sinnes and infirmities. Leave vain things to the vain, and do thou give heed to that which God commandeth: shut the door upon thy self, and call unto thee Jesus thy Beloved. Stay with him in thy closet,

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closet, for thou shalt not find so great peace any-where else: Hadst thou not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumours, thou hadst lived more at content. Seeing therefore thou delightest sometimes to hear news, it is fit thou suffer for it some unquietnesse and trouble of mind.

CHAP. XXI.

Of Compunction of heart.

IF thou wilt profit any thing, keep thy self alwayes in the fear of God, and yield not too much scope to liberty. Keep in awe all thy senses under the severe rod of discipline, and give not thy self over to foolish mirth. Give thy self to compunction of heart, and thou shalt find much devotion therein: compunction bringeth much good which dissoluteness is wont quickly to destroy. It is a wonder that any man can heartily rejoyce in this life, if he duly consider his banishment, and thoroughly weigh the many perils wherewith his soul is in-

invironed. The levity of our mind and the little care we have of our faults maketh us insensible of the sorrows of our souls.

2. But oftentimes we vainly laugh when we have just cause to weep: the service and fear of God is the truest liberty, & a good conscience a continual feast. Happy is he that can avoid all cause of distraction and recollect himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can obandon all that may defile or burrhen his conscience. Resist manfully: one custome overcometh another. If thou canst forbear meddling in other mens matters, they likewise shall not have to do with thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters which appertain to others; neither do thou meddle at all with the affairs of thy betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favour of men,

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be not grieved at it ; but take this to heart , because thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly as it becometh the servant of God , and a devout religious man. It is better oftentimes and more secure that a man hath not consolations in this life, especially such as are consonant to our carnal desires. But that we have not at all or do very feldome taste divine consolation , the fault is ours, because we seek not after inward compunction , as having not altogether forsaken outward vanities.

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and that thou hast deserved much tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and lothsome unto him. A good man findeth alwayes sufficient cause of mourning : for whether he consider his own or his neighbours estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without great tri-

tribulation. And by how much a man looks narrowly into himself, by so much he sees greater cause of lamentation. Our finnes and wickednesses wherein we lie weltring, that we can feldome apply our selves to heavenly contemplations, do minister unto us much matter of sorrow and compunction.

5. Didst thou but as often think with thy self how soon thou maist die, as how long thou maist live, there is no question but thou wouldst willingly undergo any labour or sorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greatest severity, But because we do not take these things to heart and as yet love those things onely that delight us, this makes us so dull and key-cold in religion.

6. If our body be amiss we may thank our selves for it: it is often our decay and want of spirit which maketh our miserable body so easily complain. Pray therefore un-

to the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchsafe to give thee the spirit of compunctio. And say with the Prophet, Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteousness of tears to drink.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the Consideration of humane misery.

Miserable thou art wheresoever thou be, or whithersoever thou turnest, unlesse thou turn thy self unto God. Why art thou troubled when things succeed not as thou wouldest or desirest? for who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any man upon earth; there is none in this world, be he King or Pope, without some tribulation or other. Who is then in the best estate or condition: even he who for Gods sake can suffer affliction.

2. Many weak & infirm ones can say, O what an happy life hath such an one, how wealthy, how mighty he is, in how great honour and credit!

credit! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, and thou shalt perceive that all the goods of this life are nothing so to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdensome then delightfull, because they are never enjoyed without carefulnesse and fear. Mans happines consisteth not in having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a man would be spiritual, the more bitter to him is this present life; because he seeth more clearly and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruptiō. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labour and to rest, and to be subject to other necessities of nature, is doubtlesse a great misery to a religious mind, that would gladly be free and delivered from all sinnes.

3. For the inward man is much oppressed with these outward and corporal necessities whilest we live

in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, saying, *Draw me, O Lord, out of my necessities.* But wo be to them that know not their own misery; & a greater wo to them that take delight in this miserable and corruptible life. And some there be so much dote upon it, although with great labour and pains they can scarce get mere necessities; yet could they live here alwayes, they would care nothing at all for the kingdome of heaven.

4. O how foolish are these and faithlesse in their hearts, who lie so deeply drowned in the earth, that they can think of nothing but earthly things. But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the end feel to their cost how vile & how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, & all the fast friends of Christ look not on those things which pleased the flesh, and flou-

rished for a time, but longed for the everlasting treasures with their whole hope & desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things durable and invisible, that the desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O brother, lose not thy confidence to come forward in godlinesse; there is yet time, the hour is not yet past.

5. Why wilt thou deferre thine amendment from day to day, arise and^e begin this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the best time to amend my self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time to profit best; thou must pass through fire and water before thou comest to a place of refreshing. Unless thou doest violence to thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sinne: so long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without sin, or live without for-

row. We would gladly be quiet and freed from all misery, but seeing by sinne we have lost our innocency, we have by that also forfeited our felicity. Therefore we must hold our selves content, and expect the mercy of God till this our iniquity be put away, and this mortality of ours be swallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty, which is alwayes prone to evil! to day thou confessest thy sinnes, and to morrow thou committest the very same thou hast confessed. Now thou art in the mind to look well unto thy wayes, and within a while thou so behavest thy self, as though thou hadst never any such purpose at all. Good cause have we therefore to humble our selves, and never to have any great conceit of our worth, because we are so frail and so inconstant. Besides, that may quickly be lost by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great

pains we have scarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold so timely? Wo be unto us if we will now give our selves unto ease, as if all were in peace and safety, when yet there appeareth no sign of true sanctity in our conversations! We have need like young beginners to be newly instructed again to good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and spiritual progresse.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the meditation of Death.

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore see what will become of thee hereafter. To day a man, to morrow none; and out of sight out of mind. O the stupidity and hardnesse of mans heart, who thinketh onely upon the present, and hath no care of the time to come! Thou shouldest so order thy self in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day,
yea

yea this very moment thou wert ready to depart. Hadst thou a clear conscience, thou wouldst not greatly fear death: care not so much for the death of this body, as the sinne of thy soul. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? thou knowest not what will be to morrow, and how knowest thou that thou shalt live till to morrow?

2. What are we the better to live long, if we prove not the better by long living? alas! length of dayes doth oftner make our sinnes the greater, then our lives the better. O that we had spent but one day well in this world! Many keep in mind how long it is since their conversion, and yet often forget to fructifie in a holy conversation. If to die be accounted dreadfull, to live long may prove more dangerous. Happy is he that hath his end before his eyes, and prepareth himself to die daily. If at any time thou hast seen another man

die, make account thou must follow him, he hath shewed thee but the way.

3. When it is morning, think thou mayest die before night, and when evening comes, presume not upon next morning. Be thou therefore alwayes in a readinesse, and so lead thy life that death may never take thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and when they look not for it: for the Sonne of man will come when we think not of his coming. When thy last sand shall be run out, thou wilt have a farre different opiniō of thy whole life that is past, and be exceeding sorry thou hast been so carelesse and remisse.

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboureth to be such an one in this life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death! To contemne the world perfectly, to go forward in virtue zealously, to love reproof willingly, to amēd our lives seriously, to obey superiours

ours gladly, to deny himself thoroughly, and to suffer affliction for his sake patiētly, make us confident we shall die happily. Whilest thou art in health thou mayst do many good deeds, but when thou art sick I see not what thou art able to do. Few in the weaknesse of their bodies gather strength to their souls; as they who are much abroad, are seldome the better.

5. Trust not to friends and kindred, neither do thou put off the care of thy soul till hereafter; for men will sooner forget thee, then thou art aware of. It is better to look to it betime, and do some good beforehand, then to trust to other mens courtesies. If thou dost not provide for thy self in this world, who will have care of thee in that which is to come? The time that is now present is very pretious, now is the day of salvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas! that thou shouldst spend

thy time so idely here, where thou mightest purchase to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou shalt desire one day or houre to amend in, & it is a great question whether it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger mightst thou deliver thy self! from how great fear free thy self, if thou wouldst be alwayes careful how to die! Labour now to live so, that at the hour of death thou mayst rather rejoyce then fear: learn now to die to the world, that thou mayest begin to live with Christ. Learn now to contemn all earthly things, that thou mayst freely go to Christ. Chastise thy body now by repentance, that thou mayest then have assured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why dost thou think to live long, when thou canst not promise to thy self one day? how many have been deceived and suddenly snatcht away? How often dost

dost thou hear these reports. Such a man is slain, another man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall, this man died eating, and that man playing? One perished by fire, another by the sword, another of the plague, and another was slain by thieves: thus death is the end of all, and mans life suddenly passeth away like a shadow.

8. Who shall remember thee when thou art dead? and who shall pray for thee when thou canst not help thy self? Do, do now my beloved, whatsoever thou art able to do: for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befall thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time, heap unto thy self everlasting treasures, think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the things of God. Make now friends to thy self by honouring the Saints of God, and imitating their virtues, that when thou
failest

failest in this short life , they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.

9. Keep thy self as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free from the world, and lifted up directly unto God , because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs joyned with unfeigned tears , that after death thy spirit may be happily commended into the hands of the Almighty.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of judgement , and the punishment of Sinnes.

IN all thy wayes have a speciall aim to thy end : for how canst thou be able to stand before a severe Judge to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any frivolous excuses , but will judge according to right and equity: O wretched and foolish sinner, who sometimes fearest

est the countenance of an angry and ignorant man, what answer wilt thou make to an angry and all-knowing God? Why dost thou not provide for thy self against that great day of judgment, when no man can excuse or answer for another, but every one shall have enough to answer for himself? Now ate thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groanes audible, thy grief paci- fieth for thy finnes and purgeth thy soul.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholesome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another then for his own wrongs. Who prayeth willingly for his ad- versaries, and from his heart for- giveth their offences, and delayeth not to ask forgivenesse of whom- soever he hath offended. Who is sooner moved to compassion then to anger; who often offereth vio- lence to himself, and laboureth
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earnestly to bring the body into subjection to the spirit. It is better to purge our sins and cut off offences here, then to keep them to be punished hereafter. Verily we do but deceive ourselves through an inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What is it that feedeth that everlasting fire but thy finnes? The more thou sparest thy self and followest thy pleasure now, so much the more hereafter shall be thy punishment, and a greater fewell added to that flame. In what thing a man hath sinned, in the same shall he be the more grievously punished: there shall the slothful be pricked forward with burning goads, and the gluttons vexed with great hunger & thirst. There shall the lascivious and lovers of pleasure be bathed in burning pitch and stinking brimstone; and the envious like mad dogs shall howl for very grief.

4. There is no sinne but shall have its proper and peculiar torment.

ment. There the proud shall be filled with all confusion : the covetous shall be pinched with exceeding penury : one houre of pain there shall be more bitter then a thousand years of the sharpest pennance here. There is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there: yet here we have some intermission of our labours, and enjoy the comfort of our friends. Be now solicitous and sorrowful for thy sinnes, that at the day of judgement thou maist be secure with the company of blessed souls. For then shall the righteous with great boldnesse stand against such as have vexed and oppressed them ; then shall he sit to judge men, who is now content to be judged of men. Then shall the poore and humble have great confidence, but the proud man shall be compassed with fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world who had learned for Christ to be a fool and despised,

fed. Then shall affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity shall be stopped up, then shall the deuout rejoyce and the profane mourn. Then shall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own flesh, then he that hath abounded in all pleasure and delight. Then shall the poor attire shine and glitter, and the precious robes seem vile and contemptible, then shall be more commended the poor cottage, then the stately pallace. Then will constant patience more avail as then all earthly power, and simple obedience be preferred before all worldly wisdom.

6. Then shall a good and clear conscience more rejoyce a man then the profound learning of philosophy, & the contempt of riches weigh more then all worldly treasures. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, then fared daintily: and be more glad thou hast kept silence,

lence, then that thou hast talked much. Then will good works prevail more then many godly words: then a strict life and severe repentance will be more pleasing then all earthly delight. Prove first here what thou canst indure hereafter; accustome thy self now to suffer a little, that thou mayest then be delivered from more grievous pains. If now thou canst endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetual torments? if a little suffering make thee so impatient, what will hellfire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradises: it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that reigne for ever with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived alwayes in honours and delights, what would all this avail thee if thou wert to die at this instant? All therefore is but vanity and vexation of spirit, besides the love of God and his alone service.

For

For he that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death nor judgemēt, nor of punishment, nor of hell : for perfect love gives secure access to God. But he that takes delight in sinne, what marvel is it if he be afraid both of death and judgement ? Yet it is good although love be not of force to withhold thee from sinne, that at least the fear of hell should restrain thee. But he that laieth aside the fear of God, can never continue long in good estate, but falleth quickly into the snares of the devil.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.

BE watchful and diligent in the service of God, and often be-
think thy self wherefore thou camest hither, and why thou hast left the world. Was it not that thou mightst live to God, and become a spiritual man ? be fervent then to come forward, for shortly thou shalt

thou shalt receive a reward of thy labours. There shall not be then any fear or sorrow in thy coasts: labour but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea perpetual joy to thy soul. If thou continuest faithful and fervent in doing good, no doubt but God will be faithful and liberal in rewarding thee. Thou oughtst to have a good hope for getting the victory, but thou must not be secure, lest thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, *O if I knew that I should yet persevere!* he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *What if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be secure.* And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he

he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befall him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a spiritual progress, and the diligent amendment of their lives: viz. the horreur of the difficulty, or the labour of the combat. But they above others improve most in virtue, that endeavour most to overcome those things which are grievous and contrary unto them. For there a man improveth more, and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself and mortifieth the outward man.

4. But

4. But all men have not alike to overcome and mortifie: yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions, shall profit more in virtue then another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be lesse fervent in the pursuit of virtue. Two things especially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our selves violently from that to which nature is viciously inclined, and to labour earnestly for that virtue which we most want. Be careful also to avoid with great diligence those things in thy self, which do most displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soul wheresoever thou be; so as if thou seest or hearest of any good examples, stirre up thy self to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eye observeth others, so art

art thou also noted again by others. O how sweet and comfortable a thing it is, to see the servants of Christ fervent and devout, endued with virtuous and decent manners ! And on the contrary, How pitiful and grievous a thing it is, to see them that live in a dissolute and disordered sort, not applying themselves to that for which they were called ! O how great damage and danger is it, to neglect the good purposes of their vocation, and to busie themselves in that which appertaineth not unto them, nor is committed to their care !

6. Be mindful of the profession thou hast made, and have alwayes before the eyes of thy soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Christ, seeing thou hast so slackly endeavoured to conform thy self unto him, though thou hast waited a long time in the way
of

of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously, and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary and profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any thing elsewhere, but onely in Jesus. O, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be instructed in all truth!

7. A fervent religious person taketh, and beareth all well that is commanded him: but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on all sides is afflicted: for he is void of inward consolation, and is forbidden to seek external comforts. A religious person that liveth not according to discipline, is in great danger of the ruin of his soul. He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet: for one thing or other will alwayes displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do, but alwayes with our mouth & whole heart to praise our Lord God ! O that thou mightst never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep, but mightst alwayes praise God, and onely employ thy self in spiritual exercises : thou shouldst then be much more happy then now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but onely the spiritual refectiōns of the soul, which, alas, we taste of too seldome.

9. When a man cometh to that estate, that he seeketh no comfort of any creature, then doth he begin to take perfect contentment and delight in God. Then shall he be contented with whatsoever doth befall him in this world. Thē shall he neither rejoyce in greeat matters, nor be sorrowful for small, but entirely and confidently commit himself to God ; who shall

shall be unto him all in all, to who nothing doth perish, nor die, but all things do live unto him, & serve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember alwayes thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue. If thou beginnest to wax cold, it will be evil with thee: but if thou give thy self to fervour of spirit, thou shalt find much peace, & feel less labour through the assistance of Gods grace, & love of virtue. The fervent and diligent man is ready & prepared for all things. It is harder to resist vices and passions, then to toil in bodily labours. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt alwayes rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchfull over thy self, stir up thy self, warn thy self, and whatsoever becomes of others, neglect not thy self. The greater violence thou usest against thy self, the more thou shalt profit.

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THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward life.

THe Kingdome of God is within you, saith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched world, and thy soul shall find rest. Learn to despise exteriour things, and to give thy self to the interiour, & thou shalt perceive the kingdome of God to come into thee. For the kingdome of God is peace, & joy in the holy Ghost, which is not given to the wicked. Christ will come into thee, and shew thee his consolations, if thou prepare for him a worthy mansion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaseth himself. The inward man he often visits, and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant comfort, much peace, wonderful familiarity.

2. O faithfull soul, make ready thy heart for this bridegroom, that he may vouchsafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he saith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Christ, and deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art rich, and he will suffice thee. He will be thy faithfull and provident helper in all things, so as thou shalt not need to trust in men. For men are soon changed, and quickly fail, but Christ remaineth for ever, and standeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little trust to be put in frail and mortall man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee: neither oughtest thou much to be grieved, if sometimes he crosse and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be against thee; and so on the contrary, they often turn like unto

the wind. Put all thy trust in God, let him be thy fear and thy love: He will answer for thee, and do in all things what is best. Thou hast not here an abiding city; and wheresoever thou be, thou art a stranger and pilgrime: neither shalt thou ever have rest, unless thou be most inwardly united unto Christ.

4. Why dost thou here gaze about, since this is not the place of thy rest? In heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be regarded as it were by the way. All things passe away, & thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them, lest thou be entangled, & so dost perish. Let thy thought be on the Highest, & thy prayer directed unto Christ without ceasing. If thou canst not contemplate high and heavenly things, rest thyself in the passion of Christ, and dwell willingly in his holy wounds. For if thou flie devoutly unto the wounds & precious marks

marks of the Lord Jesus, thou shalt feel great comfort in tribulation: neither wilt thou much care for being despised of men, and wilt easily hear the words of slanderous tongues.

5. Christ was also in the world despised of men, and in greatest necessity, forsaken by his acquaintance and friends in the midst of slanders. Christ would suffer and be contemned; and darest thou complain? Christ had adversaries and backbiters, and wilt thou have all men thy friends and benefactors? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no adversity happen unto thee? If thou wilt suffer no adversity, how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desire to reign with Christ.

6. If thou hadst but once perfectly entred into the secrets of Jesus, & tasted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldst thou not weigh thine own commodity or discom-

modity, but wouldst rather rejoyce at slanders, when they should chance to be cast upon thee: for the love of Jesus maketh a man to despise himself. A lover of Jesus and of the truth, and a true inward Christian and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in spirit, and with the greatest enjoyment of his soul rest in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are said and esteemed to be, is truly wise, and taught rather by God than men. He that can live inwardly, and make small reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times for performing of religious exercises. A spiritual man quickly recollecteth himself: because he never powreth out himself wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labour or businesse which may be necessary for the time:

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time : but as things fall out, so he frameth himself unto them. He that hath well ordered and disposed all things within, careth little for the strange and perverse carriages of men. So much is a man hindered and distracted, how much he draweth matters unto himself.

8. If all went well with thee, and if thou wert well purged, all things would fall out to thy good and advantage. But many things displease and often trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead unto thy self, nor separated from all earthly things. Nothing so defileth and intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to creatures. If thou refuse outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of heaven, and often receive internall joy.

CHAP. II.

Of humble submission.

REspect not much who is with thee, or who is against thee: but endeavour and take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doest. Have a good conscience and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst hold thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughtest to resign thy self unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all shame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the better keeping of humility, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, then he easily pacifieth others, and quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protecteth & delivereth the humble, he loveth and comforteth

forteth the humble: unto the humble man he inclineth himself: unto the humble he giveth great grace; and after his humiliatio he raiseth him unto glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his secrets, and sweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himself. The humble person though he suffer reproach and shame. is in peace; for that he resteth in God; and not in the world. Do not think that thou hast profited any thing, unlesse thou esteem thy self inferiour to all.

CHAP. III.

Of a good and peaceable man.

First, keep thy self in peace, and then mayst thou pacifie others. A peaceable man doth more good then he that is well learned A passionate man turneth good into evil, and easily believeth the worst. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not suspicious of any. But he that is discontented and

E 5 troubled,

troubled, is tossed with divers suspicions : he is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He oftē speaketh that which he ought not to speak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do. He cōsidereth what others are bound to do ; and neglecteth that which he is bound to himself. First therefore have a carefull zeal over thy self , and then thou mayst justly shew thy self zealous of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse & colour thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuses of others. It were more meet that thou diddest accuse thy self, and excusedst thy brother. If thou wilt be born withall, bear also with another. Behold how farre off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation but onely against himself. It is no great matter to converse with the good, and those that

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that are of a gentle disposition; for that is naturally pleasing to all, & every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with the unquiet, and perverse minds, or with the disorderly, or such as contradict us, is a great grace and a very commendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep themselves in peace, and are in peace also with others. And there are some that neither are in peace themselves, nor suffer others to be in peace: they are troublesome to others, but alwayes more troublesome to themselves. And others there are that keep themselves in peace, and labour to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble suffering, then in not feeling adversities. He that can best tell how to suffer, will best keep himself in peace. He is a conquerour of himself, a Lord of the world,

world, friend of Christ, and heir of heaven.

CHAP. IV.

Of a pure mind, and upright intention.

WITH two wings man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with simplicity and purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in our affection. Simplicity doth intend God: Purity doth apprehend and taste him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from inordinate affection. If thou intend and seek nothing else but the will of God, & the profit of thy neighbour, thou shalt enjoy internall liberty. If thy heart were sincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking-glasse of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so little and abject that representeth not the goodnesse of God.

1. If in thine own heart thou wert good and pure, then thou wouldest

wouldest be well able to see and understand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth heaven, and pierceth the depth of hell. Such as every one is inwardly, so he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the world, surely a man of a pure heart possesseth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conscience feels it. As iron put into the fire loseth his rust, and becommeth bright like fire: so he that wholly turneth himself unto God, is purged from all slothfulness, and is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold, then he is afraid of a small labour, and willingly receiveth external comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himself perfectly, and to walk manfully in the way of God, then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grievous unto him.



CHAP. V.

Of the consideration of ones self.

WE cannot trust much to our selves, for that grace oftentimes and understanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly lose by our negligence. And oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindnesse. We often do evil, & excuse it worse. We are sometimes moved with passion, & we think it to be zeal. We reprehend small things in others, and passe over greater matters in our selves. We quickly feel and weigh what we suffer at the hands of others: but we mind not what others suffer from us. He that doth well and deeply consider his own works, will find little cause to judge hardly of another.

2. The inward Christian preferreth the care of his true self before all other cares. And he that diligently attendeth unto himself, doth seldom speak much of others.

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Thou wilt never be so inwardly religious, unless thou pass over other mens matters with silence, and look especially to thy self. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy self, thou wilt be little moved with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy self? And when thou hast runne over all, what hast thou then profited, if thou hast neglected thy self? If thou desirest peace of mind and true union, thou must lesse esteem all earthly things without thee, and look onely to thy self.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy self free from all temporal cares. Thou shalt greatly decrease, if thou esteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing high, nothing grateful, nothing acceptable, but onely God himself, or that which is of God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A soul that

that loveth God , despiseth all things that be inferiour unto God. God alone is everlasting , and of infinite greatnesse, filling all creatures : the comfort of the soul, and the true joy of the heart.

CHAP. VI.

Of the joy of a good conscience.

THe glory of a good man , is the testimony of a good conscience. Have a good conscience, and thou shalt ever have joy. A good conscience is able to bear very much, and is very chearful in adversities. An evil conscience is always fearful and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou hast done well. Sinners have never true mirth , nor feel inward peace : because *there is no peace to the wicked*, saith our Lord. And if they should say, We are in peace, no evil shall fall upon us, and who shall dare to hurt us ? believe them not : for upon a sudden

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Chap. 6.

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sudden will arise the wrath of God, and their deeds shall be turned into nothing, and their conceits shall perish.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth. For to glory so, is to glory in the Crosse of our Lord. That glory is short, which is given and received from men. Sorrow alwayes accompanieth the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their consciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladnesse of the just is of God, and in God: and their joy is of the truth. He that desireth true and everlasting glory, careth not for that which passeth away with time. And he that seeketh temporal glory, or contemneth it not from his heart, sheweth himself but little to esteem of the glory of heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquillity and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praises, nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easily be content and
paci-

pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him: nor the more abject, though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art: neither canst thou be truly said to be greater, then what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man considereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do alwayes well, and to esteem little of himself, is a token of an humble mind. To refuse to be comforted by any creature, is a signe of great purity, and inward confidence.

4. He that seeketh no outward witness for himself, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himself unto God. *For not he that commendeth himself, the same is approved (saith S. Paul) but whom God commendeth.* To walk inwardly with God, and not to be possessed with

pure, with any outward affection, is the
ough state of an inward and spiritual
more man.

CHAP. V I I.

*of the love of Iesus above all
things.*

BLESSED is he that understandeth
what it is to love Iesus, and to
despise himself for Iesus. Thou
oughtest to leave thy beloved, for
thy beloved; for that Iesus will be
beloved alone above all things.
The love of things created is de-
ceitfull and unconstant: the love
of Iesus is faithfull and constant.
He that cleaveth unto creatures,
shall fall with that which is sub-
ject to fail: He that imbraceth
Iesus, shall stand firmly for ever.
Love him, and keep him for thy
friend, who when all go away, will
not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to
perish in the end. Thou must once
be left of all, whether thou wilt
or no.

2. Live and die with Iesus; and
commit thy self unto his trust, who
when

when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will not have another to be entertained; but will have thy heart alone, and sit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldst purge thy self perfectly of all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoever thou puttest in men, out of Iesus, is all no better then lost. Trust not nor relie upon a reed full of wind: for that all flesh is as grasse, and all the glory thereof shall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceived, if thou look onely to the outward shew of men. And if in them thou seekest thy comfort and profit, thou shalt often feel losse. If thou seekest Iesus in all things, thou shalt surely find Iesus. But if thou seekest thy self, thou shalt also find thy self, but to thy own harin. For man doth more hurt himself if he seek not Iesus, then the whole world,
and

and all his adversaries could annoy him.

CHAP. VIII.

*Of familiar conversation with
Iesus.*

WHEN Iesus is present, all is well, & nothing seemeth difficult: but when Iesus is absent, every thing is hard. When Iesus speaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth: but if Iesus speak but one word, we feel much consolation. Did not Mary presently rise from the place where she wept, when Martha said unto her, *The Master is come. and calleth for thee?* Happy is the houre when Iesus calleth from tears to spiritual joy. How dry and hard art thou without Iesus! How foolish and vain, if thou desire any thing out of Iesus! Is not this a greater losse, then if thou shouldest lose the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Iesus? To be without Iesus is a grievous hell; and to
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be with Iesus is a sweet Paradise. If Iesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Iesus, findeth a good treasure, yea a good above all goods. And he that loseth Iesus, loseth too much, and more then the whole world. He is most poore that liveth without Iesus: and he most rich that is well with Iesus.

3. It is great skill to know how to converse with Iesus, and great wisdom to know how to keep Iesus. Be humble and peaceable, and Iesus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Iesus will stay with thee. Thou mayest soon drive away Iesus and lose his grace, if thou givest thy self to outward things. And if thou shouldest drive him from thee, and lose him, unto whom wilt thou flee, and what friends wilt thou then seek? Without a friend thou canst not well live: and if Iesus be not above all a friend unto thee, thou shalt be too too sorrowful and desolate.

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Thou doest therefore foolishly, if thou dost trust or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world against thee, then Iesus offended with thee. Amongst all things therefore that be dear unto thee, let Iesus alone be thy chiefest beloved.

4. Love all for Iesus, but Iesus for himself. Iesus Christ alone is especially to be beloved; who alone is found to be good, and faithfull above all friends. For him, and in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee; and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth onely unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any: but let Iesus be in thee, and in every good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and
in-

intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and carry a pure heart to God, if thou wilt consider, and prove, and see how sweet our Lord is. And truly, unlesse thou be prevented, and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happinesse to forsake and cast away all, that thou alone maist be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a man, then he is strong, and nothing is hard unto him. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left onely unto pain and punishments. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair, but to religne thy self with all indifferency unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befall thee for the glory of Christ: for after winter followeth summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the want of all comfort.

IT is no hard matter to despise humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort : and for the honour and glory of God, to be willing to endure desolation of heart ; and to seek himself in nothing, not to regard his own-mérit. What great matter is it, if thou be cheerfull & devout at the coming of grace ? This hour is wished for of all men. He rideth easily whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvell if he feel not his burden who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the soveraign guide ?

2. We are alwayes willing to have something for our comfort : and a man doth hardly put off and forsake himself. The holy martyr Saint Lawrence overcame the world with his Prelate: because he despised whatsoever seemed de-

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light.

lightsome in the world, and for the love of Christ he patiently suffered Sixtus to be taken frō him, whom he most dearly loved. He overcame therefore the love of man by the love of the Creatour ; & he rather chose the divine good pleasure, then humane comfort. See thou also learn to forsake some necessary thing, and a beloved friend for the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length must be separated one from another.

3. A man must fight long, and mightily with himself before he get the victory over himself, and be able to draw his whole heart in to God. When a man trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto humane comforts. But a true lover of Christ, and a dilligent follower of virtue, giveth not himself to such solaces, nor seeketh sensible sweetnesses but rather hard exercises and to sustain great labours for Christ,

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4. When therefore spirituall comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully : but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly ; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary & fearfull in all thine actions, for that hour will passe away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently : but with humility and patience wait for the heavenly visitation : for God is able again to give thee greater consolation. This is not new, nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God : for in the great Saints and ancient Prophets, there was oftentimes such kind of alteration.

5. For which cause one under the enjoyment of divine favour, said, *I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.* But when this was gone from him, he addeth what he found

in himself, saying, *Thou turnedst thy face from me. and I became troubled.* Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto the Lord, and saith, *Unto thee, O Lord, I will cry, and I will pray unto my God.* Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying, *The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me; the Lord is become my helper.* But wherein? *Thou hast turned,* saith he, *my sorrow into joy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladness.* If great Saints have been so dealt withall, we that are weak & poore ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold; for the spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Job saith, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.*

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust.

but

but in the great mercy of God alone and in the onely hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the presence of good men, or religious brethren, or faithful friends, or holy books, or learned treatises, or sweet songs and hymns, all these help little, and have little favour, when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At such a time there is no better remedy then patience, and the resigning of my self unto the will of God.

7. I never found any so religious and devout, that hath not had sometimes a with-drawing of grace, or felt not a decrease of fervour. There was never Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated, who first or last was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a signe of ensuing comfort. And unto those

that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. *He that shall overcome, saith he, I will give him to eat of the tree of life.*

8. But divine comfort is given, that a man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest he should wax proud of any good. The devil sleepeth not, neither is the flesh as yet dead. Therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel: for on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never rest.

CHAP. X.

Of thankfulness for the grace of God.

WHy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labour? Dispose thy self to patience, rather then to comforts: and to the bearing of the crosse, rather then to gladnesse. What secular person is there, that would not willingly receive spirituall joy and comfort, if he could alwayes have it? Spirituall comforts exceed all the delights of the world, and all the pleasures of the flesh

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flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean: but spirituall delights are onely pleasant & honest, born of virtues, and infused by God into pure minds. But no man can alwayes enjoy these diuine comforts according to his desire: for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. False freedome of minde, and great trust of our selves is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are ungratefull to the giver, and return them not wholly to the head fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankfull: and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolation that taketh from me compunction: nor that contemplation which

breedeth a haughty minde. For all that is high, is not holy ; nor all that is sweet, good ; nor every desire, pure ; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is gratefull to God. I do willingly accept of that grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and fearfull, and be made more ready to forsake my self. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather acknowledge himself poor and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, & ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own: that is, give thanks to God for his grace, and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but only sinne and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Content thy self alwayes with the lowest, and the highest shall be given thee: for the highest stand not without the lowest. The chiefeſt Saints before God, are the

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the least in their own judgements. And how much the more glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and heavenly glory, are not desirous of vain glory. Those that are firmly settled and grounded in God, can no way be proud, And they that ascribe all unto God, what good-soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone : and desire above all things to praise God in himself, and in all the Saints, and alwayes tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore gratefull for the least gift, and thou shalt be made worthy to receive greater. Let the least be unto thee also as the greatest: & the most contemptible as an especial gift. If thou consider the worth of the giver, no gift will seem little, or of mean esteem. For it is not little that is given by the most high God. Yea, if he should give punishment and stripes, it

ought to be gratefull ; for that he doth is alwayes for our salvation, whatsoever he permitteth to happen unto us. He that desireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankfull for the grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary & humble, lest he lose it.

CHAP. XI.

How few the lovers of the Crosse of Christ are.

JESUS hath now many lovers of his heavenly kingdome, but few bearers of his Crosse. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulatiō. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, or with him. Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread : but few to the drinking of the cup of his passion. Many reverence his miracles: few follow the ignominy of his crosse. Many love
Jesus

Jesus as long as adversities happen not. Many praise and blesse him, as long as they receive any comforts from him. But if Jesus hide himself, and leave them but a while, they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Jesus for Jesus, & not for some comfort of their own, blesse him in all tribulation and anguish of heart, as well as in the greatest comfort. And although he should never give them comfort, they notwithstanding would ever praise him, and alwayes give him thanks.

3. O how powerfull is the pure love of Jesus, which is mixed with no self-love nor proper interest! Are they not all to be called hirelings, that ever seek comforts? Do they not shew themselves to be rather lovers of themselves than of Christ, that alwayes think of their commodity and gain? Where may one be found that will serve God freely?

4. It

4. It is hard to find any one so spirituall that is stript of the love of all earthly things. For where is any that is indeed poor in spirit, and free from all affection of creatures? Farre hence, and from the end of the world is his place. If a man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should outwardly expresse great repentance yet is it little. And if he should attain to all knowledge, he is yet farre off. And if he should have great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting: to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that? That leaving all, he forsake himself, and go perfectly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love. And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemd: but according to truth, but let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable
 ser-

servant, as our Saviour hath said, *When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poor in spirit and naked, and say with the Prophet, *I am alone and poor: yet no man richer, no man more powerfull, no man more free then he that can leave himself and all things, and put himself in the meanest and lowest place.*

CHAP. XII.

Of the highway of the Holy Cross.

UNTO many seemeth hard this speech, *Deny thy self, take up thy Cross, and follow Iesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the word of the Cross, shall not then fear to hear the sentence of everlasting damnation. This signe of the Cross shall be in heaven, when our Lord shall come to judge.

judgement. Then all the servants of the Crosse, who in their lifetime conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Judge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore fearest thou to take up the Crosse, which leadeth thee to a Kingdome? In the Crosse is health, in the Crosse is life, in the Crosse is protection against our enemies, in the Crosse is infusion of heavenly sweetnesse, in the Crosse is strength of mind, in the Crosse is joy of spirit, in the Crosse is the height of virtue, in the Crosse is the perfection of sanctity. There is no health of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Crosse. Take up therefore thy Crosse and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Crosse, & is dead for thee on the Crosse; that thou mayest also bear thy Crosse, and desire to die on the Crosse with him. For if thou dyest with him,

him, thou shalt also live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou shalt be partaker with him also in glory.

3. Echold in the Crosse all doth consist, and all lyeth in ending our life upon it: for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Crosse, and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, then the way of the Holy Crosse. Dispose and order all things according to thy will and judgement: yet thou shalt ever find, that of necessity thou must suffer somewhat, either willingly or against thy will, so as thou shalt ever find the Crosse. For either thou shalt feel pain in thy body, or in thy soul thou shalt suffer tribulation of spirit.

4. Sometimes thou shalt be forsake of God, sometimes thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbours: & which

which is more, oftentimes thou shalt be irksome to thy self: neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; but so long as pleaseth God, thou oughtest to bear it. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou submit thy self wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man hath so cordiall a feeling of the passion of Christ, as he who hath suffered the like himself. The Cross therefore is alwayes ready, and every where attendeth thee. Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou runnest: for wheresoever thou goest, thou carriest thy self with thee, and shalt ever find thy self: both above and below, without and within, which way soever thou dost turn thee, alwayes thou shalt find the Cross: and everywhere of necessity thou must have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlasting Crown.

5. If

5. If thou bear the Crosse willingly, it will bear thee, and lead thee to thy desired end, to wit, where there shall be an end of suffering, though here there shall not. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest for thy self a new burden, and increasest thy load, and yet notwithstanding thou must bear it. If thou cast away one Crosse, without doubt thou shalt find another, and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thinkest thou to escape that which no man could ever avoid, which of the Saints in the world was without crosses, and tribulation? Verily Jesus Christ our Lord was never one hour without pain of suffering, so long as he lived. *Christ (saith he) ought to suffer, and rise again from death, and so to enter into his glory:* and how dost thou seek any other way, then this high way, which is the way of the Holy Crosse?

7. The whole life of Christ was

a Crosse and Martyrdome : & dost thou seek rest and joy ? Thou art deceived, thou art deceived, if thou seekest any other thing then to suffer tribulation : for this whole mortal life is full of miseries, and environed on every side with crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit, so much the heavier crosses he oftentimes findeth: for the love he beareth to God increaseth the grief which he endureth for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though so many wayes afflicted, is not without the remedy of some spiritual consolation, for the great good which he perceiveth to grow unto him by the bearing of his Crosse. For whilest he willingly putteth himself under it, all the burden of tribulation is turned into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace. And sometimes he is comforted

doth fortified with the desire of tribulation, and adversity, for the love of conforming himself to the Crosse of Christ, that he would not wish at any time to be without sorrow and tribulation: because he believeth that so much the more gratefull he shall be unto God, how much the more he can suffer for him. This is not a work of humane virtue, but it is the grace of Christ that can, and doth so much in frail flesh, that what naturally it always abhorreth and flyeth, that by fervour of spirit, it taketh hold on and loveth.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to bear the Crosse, to love the Crosse, chastise and subdue the body, to flie honours, to suffer contumelies with a joyfull heart, to despise himself and to wish to be despised, to bear all adversities, and damages, and to desire no prosperity in this world. If thou considerest thy self, thou shalt be able to perform no such matter
thy

thy self. But if thou trustest in the Lord, strength shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Neither shalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and bearest the Crosse of Christ.

10. Settle therefore thy self, like a good and faithfull servant of Christ, to bear manfully the Crosse of thy Lord, who was crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thy self to bear many aduersities and diuers kinds of troubles in this miserable life: for so it will be with thee, wheresoever thou be, and so surely thou wilt find it, wheresoever thou hide thy self. So it must be and there is no remedy or means to avoid tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the cup of our Lord heartily, if thou wilt be his friend, and desirest to have part with him. Leave the desire of comforts to God: let him do therein as shall best please him.

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Set thou thy heart upon the suffering of tribulations, and account them the greatest comforts: for that the sufferings of this life are not condigne to future glory, although thou alone couldst suffer them all.

11. When thou shalt come to this estate, that tribulation shall seem sweet and savoury unto thee for Christ: then thou maist think it is well with thee, for thou hast found a Paradise upon earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to suffer, and that thou desirest to flee it; so long shalt thou be ill at ease: and the tribulation thou fleest will follow thee every where.

12. If thou settlest thy self to that thou oughtest, to wit, to suffer and to die to thy self, it will quickly be better with thee, and thou shalt find peace. Although thou shouldest have been rapt even unto the third heaven with S. Paul, thou art not for this secured that thou shalt suffer no adversity. I
(saith

(saith Jesus) will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name. It resteth therefore, that thou suffer, if thou wilt love Jesus, and perpetually serve him.

13. O, would to God, thou wert worthy to suffer something for Jesus! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification also to thy neighbour! For all do commend patience, though few desire to suffer. With great reason thou oughtest to be willing to suffer a little for Christ; since many suffer farre greater things for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou oughtest to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dieth to himself; so much the more doth he begin to live to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unlesse he submit himself to the bearing of adversities for Christ. Nothing is more grateful unto God, nothing more

whole

wholesome to thee in this world,
then to suffer willingly for Christ.
And if it were in thy choice, thou
shouldest rather wish to suffer ad-
versities for Christ, then to enjoy
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shouldst be more like unto Christ,
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ing great afflictions and tribula-
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15. If there had been any bet-
ter thing, and more profitable to
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surely Christ would have shewed
it by word, and example. But he
plainly exhorted all the Disciples
that followed him, and all that
desire to follow him, to the bearing
of the Crosse, and saith, *If any
man will conne after me, let him
deny himself and take up his Crosse,
and follow me.* So as when we have
read

130 *The Christians* Book III.
read and searched all, let this be
the last conclusion, *That by many
tribulations we must enter into the
Kingdome of God.*

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

*Of the inward speech of Christ unto
a faithfull soul.*



I will hear what the
Lord God will speak
in me. Blessed is the
soul that heareth
the Lord speaking
in her, and receiveth from his
mouth the word of comfort.
Blessed are those eares that re-
ceive the sound of the divine
voice, & listen not to the whisper-
ings of the world. Blessed indeed
are those eares that hearken not
to the voice which soundeth out-
wardly, but unto the truth which
teach-

teacheth inwardly. Blessed indeed are the eyes that being shut up to outward things, are attentive to those things that are internall. Blessed are they that enter into the inward things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more & more by daily exercises to the attaining of heavenly secrets. Blessed be they that delight to converse with God, and cast from them all impediments of the world.

2. Consider these things, my soul and shut up the door of thy sensuall desires, that thou mayst hear what thy Lord God speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved, I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life; Keep thy self with me, and thou shalt find peace. Forake all transitory things, and seek those that be everlasting. What are all temporall things, but deceiving snares? and what do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creatour? Forake therefore all earthly things & labour to please
G thy

thy Creatour, and be faithfull unto him, that thou maist attain unto true happinesse.

CHAP. II.

That Truth speaketh inwardly without noise of words.

CH R I S T I A N, Speak Lord for thy servant heareth : I am thy servant, grant me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy speech descend as the dew into my soul. The children of Israel in times past said unto Moses, *Speak thou unto us, and we will hear thee : Let not our Lord speak unto us, lest we die.* Not so Lord, not so, I beseech thee, But I rather with the Prophet Samuel, humbly and earnestly intreat, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.* Let not Moses speak unto me, nor any of the Prophets, but thou rather speak, my Lord God, the inspirer and enlightner of all the Prophets : for thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me.

but

un- but they without thee can profit
into nothing.

2. They can pronounce words,
but they give not spirit. They speak
marvellous well, but if thou hold
thy peace, they inflame not the
heart. They deliver the letters, but
thou openest the sense. They bring
forth mysteries, but thou disclovest
the understanding of sealed things.
They declare thy commande-
ments, but thou helpest to fulfill
thé. They shew the way, but thou
givest strength to walk in it. They
work onely exteriorly, but thou
instructest and enlightnest the
hearts. They water outwardly, but
thou givest fruitfulness. They
sound forth words but thou givest
understanding to the hearing,

3. Let not therefore Moses speak
unto me, but thou my Lord God,
the everlasting truth; lest I should
die, and become without fruit, if I
be warmed outwardly onely, and
not inflamed within; lest the word
heard and not fulfilled, known &

not loved, beleived and not observed, should increase my judgement. Speak therefore Lord, for thy servant heareth, for thou hast the words of everlasting life. Speak unto me to the comfort of my soul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praise and glory, and everlasting honour,

CHAP. III.

That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.

CHRIST. Sonne, hear my words, words of greatest sweetness, excelling all the knowledge of the Philosophers and wise men of this world. My words are *spirit and life*, not to be weighed by the understanding of man. They are not to be drawn to vain liking but to be heard with silence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

CHRISTIAN. And I said Blessed is the man whom thou shalt

shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach thy law, that thou mayest give him quietness from the evil dayes, and that he be not destroyed upon earth.

2. CHRIST. I (saith our Lord) have taught the Prophets from the beginning, and cease not continually to speak to every one: but many are deaf, and give no care to my speech. The greater number do more willingly listen to the world, then to God: & follow sooner the desires of their flesh, then the will of God. The world promiseth temporall and small things, and is served with great diligence: I promise most high and eternall things, and the hearts of men are nothing moved with it. Who is he that serveth and obeyeth me with equal care to that with which the world, and the Lords thereof are served? *Blush O Sidon, saith the sea.* And if thou ask the cause, hear wherefore: For a little Prebend a long journey is

undertaken; for everlasting life many will scarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after greedily: for a peny sometimes there is foul contention: for a vain thing & sleight promise, men cease not to toil day and night.

3. But (alas) for an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour and glory without end, they are loth to take the least pains. Blush therefore slothfull & complaining Servant, that they are found more readie to destruction, then thou to life. They rejoyce more at vanity, then thou at truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope; but my promise deceiveth none, nor sendeth him away emptie that trusteth in me. I will give that which I have promised, I will fulfill that which I have said; but to him that remains faithfull in my love to the end. I am the rewarder of all that are good, and do

do trie my devout servants with strong trialls

4. Write my words in thy heart, and think diligently of them: for they will be necessarie in time of temptaion. What thou understandest not when thou readest, thou shalt know in the day of visitation. I am wont to visit my elect two severall wayes, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I daily reade two lessons unto them one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increases of virtues. He that hath my words and despiseth them, hath within himself that shall judge him at the last day.

*The CHRISTIAN'S prayer to
implore the Grace of devotion.*

5. O Lord my God, thou art all that I can desire. Who am I, that dare speak unto thee? I am thy poorest servant, and a most vile worm: much more poor and con-

temptible then I can or dare expresse. Remember Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, just, and holy : thou canst do all things, performest all things, sendest only a sinner empty away. Call to minde thy mercies, and fill my heart with thy grace, who wilt not that thy works be void, and in vain.

6. How can I support my self in this miserable life, unlesse thy mercy and grace cōfort me ? Turn not thy face from me : delay not thy visitation ; draw not away thy comfort, lest my soul become as earth without water unto thee. Lord, teach me to fulfill thy will ; teach me to live worthily, and humbly in thy sight ; for thou art my wisdom, thou dost truly know me, and didst know me before the world was made, and before I was born into the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

*That we ought to live in truth and
humility in the sight of God.*

CHRIST. Some, walk in my
sight in sincerity & truth: and
ever seek me in plainness of heart.
He that walketh in my sight in
truth, shall be defended from evil
incursions, and the truth shall de-
liver him from seducers, and from
the detractions of the wicked. If
the Truth shall have made thee
free, thou shalt be truly free, and
shalt not care for vain speeches of
men.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, it is
true. According as thou saist, so I
beseech thee let it be done with
me, and keep me, and bring me to a
happy end. Let thy truth teach me,
and let it deliver me from all evil
affection and inordinate love: and
I shall walk with thee in great
freedom of heart.

2. CHRIST. I will teach thee
(saith the Truth) those things that
are right and pleasing in my sight.

. . . G 5 Think

Think of thy finnes with great displeasure & grief, and never esteem thy self any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a sinner & subject to many passions. Of thy self thou alwayes tendest to nothing and art quickly cast down and overcome ; quickly troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to despise thy self ; for thou art much weaker then thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing seem much unto thee whatsoever thou do'st. Let nothing seem great, nothing precious, and wonderfull, nothing worthy of estimation, nothing high, nothing truly cōmendable and to be desired , but that which is everlasting Let the eternall Truth above all things please thee. Let thy own great unworthinesse alwayes displease thee. Fear nothing, blame, and fly nothing so much as thy finnes, & vices: which

ought to displease more then the losses of any thing whatsoever. Some walk not sincerely in my sight, but led by a certain curiosity and pride, will know my secrets, and understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation. These oftentimes (for that I resist them) do fall into great temptation and sinnes for their pride and curiosity.

4. Fear the judgements of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty But discusse not the works of the Highest. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and how much good thou hast neglected. Some carry their religion onely in books, some in pictures, some in outward signes and figures; some have me in their mouthes, but little in their heart. There are others that being illuminated in their understanding and purged in their affection do alwayes breath after things eternall, and are unwilling to hear of
the

the things of this world, and do-
 serve the necessities of nature with
 grief: & these perceive what the
 Spirit of truth speaketh in them.
 Because it teacheth them to despise
 earthly, and love heavenly things;
 to neglect the world, and day and
 night to desire heaven.

CHAP. V.

*Of the Wonderfull effect of divine
 love.*

CHRISTIAN. I praise thee,
 O heavenly Father, Father of
 my Lord Jesus Christ, for that thou
 hast vouchsafed to remember me
 a poor creature. O Father of mer-
 cies and God of all comfort, thanks
 be unto thee, who sometimes with
 thy comfort refresheth me un-
 worthy of all comfort. I ever blefs
 and glorifie thee with thy onely
 begotten Sonne, and the holy
 Ghost, for ever and ever. O God
 my Lord, the holy lover of my
 soul, when thou shalt come into my
 heart, all that is within me will re-
 joyce. Thou art my glory and the
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exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am weak in love, and imperfect in vertue, I have need to be strengthened and comforted by thee: visit me therefore often, and instruct me with thy holy discipline. Deliver me from evil passions, & heal my heart of all inordinate affections: that being cured within & well purged, I may be made fit to love, strong to suffer, and constant to persevere.

3. Love is a great thing, in very truth a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light; and beareth equally that which is unequal. For it carrieth a burden without a burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, sweet and delightful. The noble love of Jesus inforceth man to work great things, and stirreth him up to desire alwayes the most perfect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any base thing.

Love

Love will be free from all worldly affection, to the end, his inward sight be not prejudiced, that he be not entangled with the desire of any transitory gain, or troubled with the want thereof. Nothing is sweeter then love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven or in earth: for that love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God above all creatures.

4. He that loveth, flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth, he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for that he resteth in one Highest above all, from which all good floweth & proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but inflameth above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength, complaineth not of impossibility,
for

for that it thinketh all things lawfull and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to effect: whereas he that doth not love, fainteth, and lies down.

5. Love watcheth and sleeping sleepeth not; being wearied, is not tired; straightned, is not pressed; frighted, is not troubled: but like a lively flame and burning torch, breaketh upwards, and passeth through all with great security. If any one loveth, he knoweth what this voice crieth, A loud cry in the ears of God is the burning love of the soul, which saith, My God, my love, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.

6. Enlarge me in love, that with the inward mouth of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to love, & to be melted, & swim in thy love. Let me be possessed by love, mounting above my self, with excessive fervour and admiration.

Let

Let me sing the song of love,
 let me follow thee on high my be-
 loved ; let my soul spend it self in
 thy praise rejoycing through love.
 Let me love thee more then my
 self, and not my self but for thee,
 and all in thee that truly love thee,
 as the law of love commandeth
 which shineth from thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere, pious,
 sweet and delightfull, strong, pati-
 ent, faithfull, prudent, long-suffer-
 ing, manly , and never seeking it
 self. For where one seeketh him-
 self, there he falleth from love.
 Love is circumspect, humble, and
 upright : not softly, not light, nor
 attending unto vain things ; sober,
 chaste, constant, quiet, and guarded
 in all the senses. Love is subject
 and obedient to Superiours, mean
 and abject to it self, devout and
 thankfull unto God, trusting and
 hoping alwayes in him, even then
 when God imparteth no sweetness
 unto it : for without sorrow none
 liveth in love,

8. He

8. He that is not ready to suffer all things, and stand to the will of his beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and distastefull for his beloved; and not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proof of a true Lover.

CHRIST. Some, thou art not yet a strong & prudent lover.

CHRISTIAN. Wherefore Lord?

CHRIST. Because thou givest over for a small adversity, and too greedily seekest comfort. A strong lover standeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty persuasions of the enemy. As I please him in prosperity, so I am not unpleasant to him in adversity.

2. A prudent lover considereth not so much the gift of his lover, as the love of the giver. He rather esteemeth the goodwill then the value, and placeth all gifts under his

his beloved. A noble lover reſteth
not in the gift, but in me above a-
ny gift. All therefore is not loſt if
ſometimes thou haſt leſſe taſte of
me then thou wouldeſt. That good,
and ſweet deſire which thou ſome-
times feeleſt, is the effect of preſent
grace, and a certain fore-taſte of
the heavenly cōuntry, whereon
thou muſt not rely too much, for
it goeth and cometh. But to fight
againſt evil motions of the mind
which may happen unto thee, and
to deſpiſe the ſuggeſtion of the
devil, is a ſign of virtue and great
courage.

3. Let not therefore ſtrange fan-
cies forced into thee of any matter
whatſoever trouble thee. Retain a
firm purpoſe and an upright inten-
tion to God. Neither is it an illu-
ſion that ſometimes thou art ſud-
denly raviſhed into an holy ex-
ceſſe, and preſently returneſt again
unto the accuſtomed vanities of
thy heart. For thou doſt rather un-
willingly ſuffer them, then commit
them:

them: and as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is a gain and no losse.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good; & to divert thee from all religious exercise: to wit, from the devout memory of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sinnes, from the guard of thine own heart, and from the firm purpose of profiting in virtue. He thrusteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cause a wearisomnesse and horroure in thee, to draw thee from devout prayer and reading. Humble confession is displeasing unto him; and if he could, he would cause thee to cease from receiving the Sacrament. Trust him not, nor care for him, although he should often set snares of deceit so intrap thee. Charge him with it when he suggesteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee; Say unto him, Away filthy spirit, bluish miserable wretch; thou art very filthy
that

that bringest such things unto mine ears. Away from me wicked deceiver, thou shalt have no part in me : but Jesus shall be with me as a strong warriour , and thou shalt stand confounded. I had rather die, and undergo any torment then to consent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be silent ; I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldst work me many troubles. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear ? If whole armies should stand together against me , my heart shall not fear: The Lord is my helper and my redeemer.

5. Fight like a good souldier : and if thou sometimes fall through frailty, take greater strength then before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self and pride. This brings many into errour, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindnesse. Let the fall of the proud , foolishly presuming

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suming of themselves, serve thee
for a warning, and a perpetual hu-
miliation.

CHAP. VII.

*That grace is to be hid under the
veil of humility.*

CHRIST. Sonne, it is more
profitable and safe for thee to
hide the grace of devotion; not to
extoll thy self, nor to speak much
nor to esteem much thereof: but
rather to despise thy self, and fear
it, as given to one unworthy there-
of. This affection is not to be clea-
ved unto which may be quickly
changed unto the contrary. Think
when thou art in grace, how mise-
rable and needy thou art wont to
be without grace. Neither doth
therein onely consist the profiting
of spiritual life, when thou hast
the grace of comfort; but when
thou humbly, selfdenyingly & pa-
tiently sufferest the withdrawing
thereof: so that thou be not then
lesse diligent in the exercise of
prayer, nor suffer thy self to passe
over

over the rest of thy accustomed duties ; but that thou willingly perform what lieth in thee, according as thou art able and understandest to be fit : not neglecting thy self wholly for the drinesse and trouble of mind which thou feelest.

2. There are many that when it succeedeth not well with them, presently they becoë impatient or slothfull. The way of man is not alwayes in his power, but it belongeth to God to give and to comfort when he will, & how much he will, and whom he will, as it shall please him, and no more. Some unadvised persons have overthrowen themselves for the greedy desire which they had of the grace of devotion, attempting more then they were able to perform, not weighing the measure of their weakness, but following rather the desire of their heart, then the judgement of reason. And because they presumed on greater matters then were pleasing to God, they quickly lost his grace.

They

They were made needy, and left in a dejected estate, that built themselves nests in heaven: to the end that being humbled and impoverished, they may learn not to flie with their own wings, but to live in hope under my feathers. They that are yet new, and unacquainted in the way of the Lord; unless they govern themselves by the counsel of discreet persons, may easily be deceived and overthrown,

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgment, then give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they cannot be drawn from their own conceit. Seldome those that are self-wise suffer themselves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledge with humility, and a slender understanding, is better then great treasures of learning with a vain self-liking. It is better for thee to have lesse, then much of that whereof thou

thou mayest be proud. He doth not discreetly, that wholly giveth himself over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaste fear of God; which feareth to lose the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuously wise, that in time of adversity or any tribulation whatsoever, yieldeth to despairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me lesse confidently then he ought.

4. He that will be over secure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of warre too dejected and fearfull. If thou couldest alwayes continue humble, and lowly within thy self, and order and govern thy spirit well, thou shouldest not so soon fall into danger and offence. It is good counsell, that when thou conceivest fervour of spirit, thou shouldest think what will become of thee, when that light shall leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again,

again, which for thy instruction and my glory I have with-drawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profitable, then if thou shouldest alwayes enjoy prosperity according to thy desire. For religion is not to be weighed in a man by the number of visions and comforts which he hath, or by his knowledge in Scripture, or by his being placed in high degree, but in that he is grounded in true humility, and filled with divine love; if he alwayes purely and entirely seek the honour of God, if he esteem himself nothing, and with a sincere heart despise himself, and rejoyce more to be despised and humbled by others, then to be honoured.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.

CHRISTIAN. Shall I speak unto my Lord, sith I am dust and ashes? If I esteem better of myself, behold thou standest against
H me,

me, and my iniquities bear true witness : neither can I speak against it. But if I abase and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self-esteem, and (as I am) account my self to be dust, thy grace will be favourable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart, and all estimation, how little soever, shall be swallowed up in the deep valley of my nothingness, and perish everlastingly. Then thou shewest my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come : for alas I am nothing, And I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing, and meer infirmity. But when thou suddenly look upon me, I am presently made strong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvel, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously embraced by thee, that of mine own weight all wayes sink downward.

2. Thy love is cause hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving

in so many necessities, preserving me also from grievous dangers, and (as I may truly say) delivering me from innumerable evils. For surely by evil loving my self, I lost my self: and by seeking thee alone, and sincerely loving thee, I have found both my self and thee, and for thy love have more deeply brought my self to nothing. For that thou, O most sweet Lord, dealest with me above all desert, and above all that I dare hope and request.

3. Blessed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of all good, yet the nobleness of thy bounty and thy infinite goodness never ceaseth to do good, even to the ungrateful, and to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankful, humble, and holy, for thou art our safety, our power, and our strength.

CHAP. IX.

That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.

CH R I S T. Son, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desire to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified, which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it self, and unto creatures. For if in any thing thou seek thy self, thou presently faintest, and dryest up within thy self. Refer therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Consider every thing as flowing from the highest good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their Original.

2. Out of me, as out of a living fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich do draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, shall not be

be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but shall be many wayes hindred and straitned. Thou oughtest therefore to ascribe no good unto thy self, nor attribute the praise of virtue unto any man: but give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing. I have bestowed all, and will that all be returned to me again: and with great strictnesse require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain-glory. And if heavenly grace, and true love enter in, there shall be no envie nor straitnesse of heart, neither shall there be any place for self-love. For divine love overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the soul. If thou understand aright, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praised above all things, and to be blessed in all.

CHAP. X.

*That despising the world, it is sweet to
serve God.*

CHRISTIAN. Now I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent. I will say in the ears of my God, my Lord, and my King that is on high, O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for those that fear thee ! But what art thou to them that love thee ? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart ? Truly unspeakable is the sweetness of thy contemplation, which thou bestowest on them that love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetness of thy love, for that when I was not, thou madest me : and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might serve thee, and hast commanded me to love thee.

2. O fountain of everlasting love ! what shall I say of thee ? How can I forget thee, that hast vouchsafed

to

to remember me, even when I was
sted away, and perished? Thou hast
shewed mercy to thy servant be-
yond all my expectation: and hast
bestowed thy grace and friendship
beyond all merit. What shall I re-
turn unto thee for this grace? For
it is not granted to every one to
forsake all things, to renounce the
world, and to undertake a life of
religious retiredness. Is it much
that I serve thee, whom all crea-
tures are bound to serve? It ought
not to seem much unto me, to serve
thee; but this rather seemeth much
and marvellous unto me, that thou
vouchsafest to receive into thy ser-
vice one so poor and unworthy,
and to joyn him with thy beloved
servants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I
have, and whereby I serve thee.
And yet in very deed thou rather
servest me than I thee. Behold,
heaven and earth, which thou hast
created for the service of man, are
ready at hand, & do daily perform
what-

whatsoever thou dost command; and this is little: yea, thou hast also appointed the Angels to the service of man. But that which excelleth all, is, that thou thy self hast vouchsafed to serve man, and promised to give thy self unto him.

4. What shall I give thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serve thee all the dayes of my life! I would I were able at least for one day, to do thee some worthy service! Thou art truly worthy of all service, of all honour and everlasting prayse. Thou art truly my Lord, and I thy poor servant, that am bound to serve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praising thee. And this I wish to do, this I desire: and whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to supply.

5. It is a great honour, a very great glory to serve thee, & despise all things for thee. For great grace
shall

shall be given to them that shall willingly subject themselves to thy most holy service. They shall receive most sweet comfort of the holy Ghost, that for thy love shall renounce all carnal delights. They shall attain great freedome of mind, that for thy names sake shall enter into the narrow way, and shall have left off all care of this world.

¶ 6. O sweet and delightfull service of God, by which man is truly made free and holy! O sacred state of religious employment, which maketh man equal to Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to devils, gratefull and of great esteem to all the faithfull! O service to be embraced, and alwayes wished for, by which we obtain the greatest good, and attain to that joy which never shall have end!

C H A P. XI.

*That the desires of our heart are
to be examined and
moderated.*

C H R I S T: Son, thou oughtest to learn many things more, which thou hast not yet well learned.

C H R I S T I A N. What are those, Lord?

C H R I S T. That thou frame thy desires wholly according to my pleasure; and be not a lover of thy self, but a diligent follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes do stirre thee up, and drive thee forwards with violence: but consider whether thou art moved rather for my honour, then for thine own profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever I shall ordain: but if there lurk in thee any self-seeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee, and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou leane not too much upon thy own pre-conceived

conceived desire, without asking my counsel, lest perhaps afterwards it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desiredst as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed: nor every contrary affection at the first to be fled. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires and endeavours; lest by importunity thou incur distraction of mind, and by thy want of self government beget a scandal unto others; or being gainsaid by others, thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensual appetites, and respect not what the flesh would, or would not; but rather to labour that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, untill it readily obey in all things, and

and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with plaine things, and not to murmur against any inconvenience.

CHAP. XII.

Of the effect of Patience, and of strife against concupiscence.

CHRISTIAN. Lord God, I perceive Patience is very necessary unto me : for that many adversities do happen in this life. Howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction.

CHRIST. So it is Son. And my will is not that thou seek after that peace which is void of temptations, or that which feeleth no contrariety ; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many adversities.

2. If thou say that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire hereafter : of two evils the less is alwayes to be chosen. That thou mayst therefore
avoid

avoid everlasting punishment in the next world, endeavour to suffer patiently for God the present evils of this. Dost thou think that men of this world suffer little or nothing? Thou art deceived. Look into the life even of them that live in greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say, they have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make small account of their tribulations. Be it so, that they have whatsoever they will; but how long dost thou think it will last?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this world vanish away like smoke, and there shall be no memory of their joyes past. Yea, even while they live also, they rest not in them without bitterness, irksomness and fear. For the self-same thing in which they take their delight is oftentimes unto them the cause of sorrow. They have their desert, who for that they immoderately seek

seek and follow delights, they do not obtain them but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and false, how inordinate and filthy are all those pleasures ! Yet so drunken and blind are men that they understand it not: but like dumb beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life, they incur the eternal death of their soul. Do not thou therefore my Sonne, go after thy lusts, but forsake thine own will. Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart.

5. For if thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me : behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in the cutting off all base delights shall be thy blessing, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdrawest thy self from all comfort of creatures, so much the sweeter and more powerfull consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first
thou

thou canst not attain unto them without some sorrow, labour and strife. Thy old custome will make resistance; and thou must overcome it with another custome that is better. Thy flesh will murmur; but thou must bridle it with fervour of spirit. The old serpent will sting and trouble thee: but by prayer he shall be put to flight, and with profitable labour thou shalt stop the way against him.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ.

CHRIST. Sonne, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from grace. And he that seeketh things private, shall lose the publick. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superiour, it is a signe that his flesh is not perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes kicketh and murmureth against him.

him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superiour, if thou desirest to subdue thine own flesh. For the outward enemy is sooner overcome, if the inward man be not wasted. There is no worse enemy, nor more troublesome to the soul, then thou unto thy self, not agreeing well with the spirit. Thou must of necessity have a true contempt of thy self, if thou wilt prevail against flesh and blood.

2. Because thou lovest thy self as yet too inordinately, therefore thou art afraid to resign thy self wholly to the will of others. But what great matter is it, if thou that art dust and nothing submit thy self to a man for God, when I the Almighty and highest Sovereign who created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto man for thee? I became the most humble and abject of all men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride with my humility. Learn to obey
thou

thou that art dust. Learn to humble thy self thou earth and clay, and put thy self under the feet of all men. Learn to break thine own will, and to yield thy self to all subjection.

3. Be earnest against thy self, and suffer not pride to live in thee: but humble and submit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the streets under their feet. Vain man, what canst thou complain of? what canst thou answer, foul sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved hell? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy soul was precious in my sight: that thou mightest know my love, and alwayes remain gratefull for my benefits: that thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

CHAP. XIV.

*of the secret judgements of God to
be considered, lest we be
extolled in our good
deeds.*

CHRISTIAN. Thou thunderest thy judgements over me,
O Lord, and shakest all my bones
with fear and trembling: my
soul is sore afraid. I stand asto-
nished, when I consider that the
heavens are not pure in thy sight.
If thou hast found wickednesse in
Angels, and hast not pardoned
them, what shall become of me?
Starres fell from heaven, and what
do I presume that am dust? They
whose works seemed commend-
able, fell into the lowest hell: and
I have seen them, that did eat
bread of Angels, to be delighted
with the husks of swine.

2. There is no sanctity, if thou,
O Lord, withdrawest thy hand.
No wisdom availeth, if thou
ceapest to govern. No strength
helpeth, if thou leavest to defend.

No

No chastity secure, if thou doest not protect it. No custody of our own profitable, if thy sacred watchfulnesse be not present. For if thou leavest us, we sink, and perish: but if thou vouchsafest to visit us, we are raised up, and do enjoy life. We are inconstant, but by thee we are strengthened: we wax cold, but by thee we receive heat.

3. O how meanly and basely ought I to think of my self! how little, yea nothing ought I to esteem it, if I seem to have any good! O Lord, how ought I to submit my self to thy bottomlesse Judgements: where I find my self to be nothing else but nothing, and less then nothing! O unmeasurable weight! O sea that can never be passed over, where I find my self onely and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking-hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vain glorying is swallowed up in the

the depth of thy judgements over me.

4. What is all flesh in thy sight? Shall the clay glory against him that frameth it? How can he be lifted up with vain words, whose heart is truly subject to God? All the world cannot lift him up, whom truth hath subjected unto itself; neither shall he be moved with the tongues of all his praises, that hath settled his whole hope in God. For they also that speak, behold, are nothing: they shall pass away with the sound of the words: but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

CHAP. XV.

*What we ought to do, and say
in every thing which we
desire.*

CHRIST. Sonne, say thus in every thing, Lord, if it be pleasing unto thee, let this be done in this sort; Lord, if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name; Lord, if thou

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seest it expedient for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may use this unto thine honour. But if thou knowest it will be hurtfull unto me, & not profitable to the health of my soul, take from me all such desire. For every desire proceedeth not from the holy Ghost, though it seem unto man right and good. It is hard to judge rightly whether a good Spirit, or the contrary drive thee to desire this or that: or whether also by thine own spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Alwaies therefore, whatsoever occurreth unto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired with the fear of God, and humility of heart: and above all thou oughtest to commit the whole unto me with full resignation of thy self: and thou oughtest to say, Lord thou knowest what is best, let this or that be done

done as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Do with me as thou knowest, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way soever thou please. Behold I am thy servant, ready to obey thee in all things: for I desire not to live unto my self, but unto thee: and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

A Prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.

3. Grant me thy grace O most gracious Jesus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and persevere with me untill the end. Grant me alwayes to desire and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will

ever follow thine; and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine : and not to be able to will, or refuse any thing else, but what thou wilt, or rejectest.

4. Grant that I may dye to all things that are in the world, and to love to be contemned for thy sake, and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and make my heart to enjoy peace in thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the onely rest : out of thee all things are troublesome and unquiet. In this peace, in the self same, that is, in thee, the one chiefest eternal Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

*That true comfort is to be sought in
God alone.*

Whatsoever I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it here, but hereafter. For
if

if I should alone have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore my soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poore, and the receiver of the humble. Expect a while, my soul, expect the divine promise, and thou shalt have abundance of all good things in heaven. If thou desire inordinately the things that are present, thou shalt lose the celestial and eternal. Have temporal things in use, and the eternal in desire. Thou canst not be filled with any temporal goods, because thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou enjoyest all that is created. yet canst thou not be happy thereby nor blessed: but in God that hath created all things, thy whole beatitude and happinesse consisteth; not such as

is seen, and commended by the foolish lovers of the world, but such as the good and faithful servants of Christ expect, and the spiritual and clean of heart, whose conversation is in heaven, sometimes have a fore-taste of. Vain and short is all humane comfort. Blessed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A Religious man every where carrieth with him Jesus his comforter, and saith unto him, Be present with me, Lord Jesus, in every place, and time. Let this be my comfort, to be alwayes willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and just proving of me, be unto me as the greatest comfort: for thou wilt not be angry alwayes, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

CHAP. XVII.

*That all our care is to be placed
in God.*

SON, suffer me to do with thee
what I please. I know what is
expedient for thee. Thou thinkest
as man ; thou judgest in many
things as humane affection per-
swadeth thee.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what
thou sayest is true. Thy care for me
is greater then all the care that I
can take for my self. For he stand-
eth totteringly, that casteth not
his whole care upon thee. Lord
so that my will may remain right
and firm in thee, do with me what-
soever it shall please thee. For it
cannot be but good, whatsoever
thou doest with me.

2. If it be thy will I should be in
darkness, be thou blessed : and
if it be thy will I should be in light,
be thou again blessed. If thou
vouchsafest to comfort me, be thou
blessed : and if thou wilt afflict
me, be thou also ever blessed.

CHRIST

CHRIST. Sonne, so thou oughtest to be minded, if thou wilt walk with me, thou must be as ready to suffer, as to receive joy. Thou oughtest to be as willing to be poor and needy, as plentiful and rich.

3. CHRISTIAN. Lord, I will willingly suffer for thee, whatsoever thy pleasure is shall befall me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand good and evil, sweet and sowre, delightful and sorrowful; and give thee thanks for all that befall me. Keep me from all sin, and I will neither fear death nor hell: so as thou dost not for ever cast me from thee, and blot me out of the book of life, what tribulations soever befall me, shall not hurt me.

CHAP. XVIII.

That temporal miseries, after the example of Christ, must be borne patiently.

CHRIST. Son, I descended from heaven for thy salvation, I

took upon me thy miseries, my own love, and not any necessity drawing me thereunto, that thou mightest learn patience, and not grudgingly bear temporall miseries. For from the hour of my birth, until my death on the cross, I was not without suffering of grief. I suffered great want of temporal things; I often heard many complaints against me; I bare patiently shame and reproches; for benefits I received ingratitude, for miracles blasphemies, for heavenly doctrine reprehensions.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, for that thou wert patient in thy lifetime, chiefly fulfilling herein the commandment of thy Father, it is reason that I miserable sinner should have patience in all things according to thy will, and for mine own health bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this present life be burdensome, yet notwithstanding it is now by thy grace made very

las!

very easie, and by thy example and the footsteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable also then it was in times past in the old Law, when the gate of heaven remained shut, and the way also to heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdom. Neither they also that then were just, and to be saved, could enter into the heavenly glory, but by thy death and holy Passion on the Cross, which was not yet exhibited.

3. O how many and great thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to shew unto me and to all the faithful a direct and most sure way to thy everlasting Kingdom! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our crown. If thou hadst not gone before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow thee? Alas! how many would stay behind

and remain far off, if they beheld not thy excellent examples ! Behold we are yet cold, although we have heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy heavenly documents: what would becom of us if we had not so great light to follow thee ?

CHAP. XIX.

Of suffering of injuries : and who is proved to be truly patient.

CH R I S T. What is it thou sayest, Son ? Cease to complain, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance unto blood. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of them that have suffered so much, so strongly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many ways tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind the more heaveie sufferings of others, that thou mayest the easier bear the little adversities which thou sufferest. And if they seem not little, beware lest thy impatience be cause thereof. Yet whether they be little or great

great, endeavour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou disposest thy self to suffering, so much the more wisely thou doest, and so much the more favour dost thou procure, thou shalt more easily also endure it, if thy mind be prepared, and thy self accustomed thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things of such an one, at the hands of such a person; nor, such things are not to be suffered by me, for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with those things which I never thought of: but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned, but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3 He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But he that is indeed patient,

ent, mindeth not by whom he is exercised; whether by his Superiours, or some of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse and unworthy person. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversity befallerh him, he taketh all this thankfully, as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a great gain: for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, can be without reward.

4. Be thou therefore alwayes prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have thy victory. Without combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refuseth to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently: without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fight can the victory be obtained.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace

grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer little, and that I am quickly disinayed, when a small adversity ariseth. Let every exercise of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcome for thy name : for to suffer and to be troubled for thy sake, is very profitable for my soul.

CHAP. XX.

Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities : and of the miseries of this life.

CHRISTIAN. I will confess against me my unrighteousness, I will confess unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities. Oftentimes it is a small matter that discomforteth, and grieveth me. I purpose to act with courage, but when a small temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whilest I think my self somewhat safe, when I least expect it. I

find my self sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behold therefore, Lord, my weakness and frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me, and deliver me out of the myre of my infirmities, that I stick not fast therein : Let me not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes beateth me back, and confounds me in thy sight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting of my passions. And although I do not altogether consent, yet their continual assaults are troublesome and grievous unto me : and it is tedious and a very irksome thing to live thus daily in strife. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do alwayes much more easily enter in upon me, then they can be cast out again.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithful souls, let it please thee to consider the labour and sorrow of thy servant, and
assist

assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with heavenly strength, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand, against which I ought to fight as long as I breathe in this miserable life. Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where all is full of snares, and enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another cometh, yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many afflictions, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life, that begetteth so many deaths and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed, that it is deceitful and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the inclinations of the flesh

flesh do too much over-rule us. Some things draw us to love it, others to condemn it. To the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us : but the pains and miseries that do justly follow them, cause a hatred and loathsomeness thereof.

5. But alas ! wicked pleasure overcometh the mind which is given over to the world ; and she esteemeth it a delight to be under thorns , because she hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetness of God, and the inward pleasantness of virtue. But they that perfectly condemn the world, and endeavour to live to God under holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the divine sweetness promised to the true forsakers of the world, and do more clearly see how grievously the world erreth, and how it is many ways deceived.

CHAP. XXI.

*That we are to rest in God above all
his gifts.*

CHRISTIAN. Above all things, and in all things, my soul, thou shalt ever rest in God, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, most sweet and loving Jesu, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power & dignity, above all knowledge and subtlety, above all riches & arts, above all joy and gladness, above all fame & praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all desert and desire, above all gifts and presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all mirth and jubilee that the mind of man can receive and feel: lastly, above Angels and Archangels and above all the heavenly host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that thou art not, my God.

2. For

2. For that thou, my Lord God, art best of all : thou alone most high, thou alone most powerfull, thou alone most full & sufficient, thou alone most sweet and comfortable, thou alone most beautiful and loving, thou alone most noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been, and shall be : and therefore it is too little and not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promist, whilest thou art not seen, and not fully obtained : for surely my heart cannot truly rest nor be fully contented, unless it rest in thee, and surmount all gifts and creatures whatsoever.

3. O my most beloved Bridegroom Christ Jesus, the most pure lover, the governour of all creatures, O that I had the wings of true liberty to flie and rest in thee ! O when shall it be fully granted

me

me to consider in quietnesse of mind, and see how sweet thou art, my Lord God ! When shall I fully recollect my self in thee , that for thy love I may not sell my self, but thee alone , above all sense and feeling in a manner not known unto all ! But now I oftentimes sigh, and bear my infelicity with grief; for that many evils occur in this vale of miseries , which do often trouble, grieve, and overcloud me; often hinder and distract me, allure and intangle me , to the end I should not have free access unto thee , and that I should not enjoy thy sweet embracings, which thou alwayes givest to the blessed Spirits. Let thy sighs and manifold desolations on earth move thee.

4. O Jesus, the brightness of eternal glory , and comfort of the pilgrime-soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, & my silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me his poor servant, & make me

me glad. Let him put out his hand and deliver miserable me from all anguish. Come, come blessed Lord; for without thee I shall have no joyfull day nor houre. For thou art my joy, and without thee my table is empty. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned, and loaden with irons, untill thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and givest me liberty, and shewest a friendly countenance unto me.

5. Let others seek what they please in stead of thee: but for me, nothing else doth, nor shall delight me, but thou only my God my hope, my everlasting health. I will not hold my peace, nor cease to pray, untill thy grace return again, and thou speak inwardly unto me.

CHRIST. Behold I am here: behold I come unto thee, because thou hast called upon me. Thy tears and the desire of tny soul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy

thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

CHRISTIAN. And I said, Lord, I have called thee, and have desired to enjoy thee, being ready to refuse all things for thee. For thou first hast stirred me up that I might seek thee. Blessed be thou therefore, O Lord, that hast shewed this goodness to thy servant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy servant more to say before thee, but that he do greatly humble himself in thy sight, alwayes mindfull of his own iniquity, and baseness? For there is none like unto thee in all whatsoever is wonderfull in heaven and earth. Thy words are good, thy judgements true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praise therefore and glory be unto thee, O wisdom of the Father: let my mouth, my soul, and all creatures together, praise and bless thee.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

*Of the remembrance of the manifold
benefits of God.*

CH R I S T I A N. Open, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me to understand thy will, & to remember thy benefits, as well in general, as in particular, with great reverence and diligent consideration: that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. **B**ut I know, and confess, that I am not able to give thee due thanks, for the favors which thou bestowest upon me, even in the least moment. I am less than the least of all thy mercies: and when I consider thy nobleness, the greatness thereof maketh my spirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our soul and body, and whatsoever we possess outwardly or inwardly, naturally or supernaturally, are thy benefits, and do speak thee bountifull, pious, and good, from whom

whom we have received all good things. Although one have received more, another less, all notwithstanding are thine, and without thee even the least cannot be had. He that hath received greater, cannot glory of his own desert, nor extoll himself above others, nor insult over the lesser: for he is greater and better that ascribeth least unto himself; and is more humble and devout in rendring thanks. And he that esteemed himself vilest of all men, and judgeth himself most unworthily, is fittest to receive greater blessings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be sorry nor bear it impatiently, nor envy them that are enriched with greater store, but attend rather unto thee, and highly praise thy goodness, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifully, so freely, and so willingly without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be

be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be given to every one; and why this man hath lesse, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to judge, who dost weigh in just measure the actions of every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I esteem it a great mercy, not to have much, whereby outwardly & before men I might seem worthy of praise and glory: so that he, who considereth the poverty and baseness of his person, ought not therefore to conceive grief or sorrow, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: for that thou, O God, hast chosen the poor and humble, and the despised of this world for thy self, and for thy familiar and domestick attendants. Witnesses are the Apostles themselves, whom thou hast made Princes in all the earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, so humble and simple, without all malice and deceit, that they rejoyced to suffer

reproach for thy name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee, & acknowledgerh thy benefit, as thy will in him, and the good pleasure of thy eternall appointment; wherewith he ought to be so contented and comforted, but he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest: and as peaceable and contented in the last as in the first place: and as willing to be despised and contemned, and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in honour before all others, and to be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and please him better, than all the benefits which either he hath received, or may receive.

C H A P.

CHAP. XXIII.

*Of foure things that bring much
peace.*

C H R I S T. Sonne, now I will teach thee the way of peace and true liberty.

C H R I S T I A N. Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou sayest, for I shall be very glad to hear it.

C H R I S T. Endeavour my Sonne, to do rather the will of another, than thine own. Ever choose rather to have less than more. Alwaies seek the lowest place, and to be inferiour to every one. With alwayes, and pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behold such a man entered into the bounds of peace, and most quiet rest.

2. C H R I S T I A N. Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sense, and abundant in fruit. For if it could faithfully be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel
my

my self unquiet and afflicted. I find that I have strayed from this doctrine. But thou that canst do all things, and ever lovest the profiting of my soul, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfill thy words, and perfect my own health.

A Prayer against evil thoughts.

3. My Lord God, be not farre from me; my God, have regard to help me : For sundry thoughts have risen up against me, & great fears, afflicting my soul. How shall I pass through them without hurt? How shall I utterly break them? I, saith he, will go befo:e thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth. I will open the doors of the prison, and reveal unto thee hidden secrets. Do Lord as thou sayest, and let all my evil thoughts fly from before thy face. This is my hope, my onely comfort, to fly unto thee in all tribulation, to trust in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

A prayer for enlightning of the mind.

4. Enlighten me good Jesus, with the cleareness of inward light, and expell all darknes from the habitation of my heart. Repress the many wandering thoughts, and bear down the temptations which violently assault me. Fight strongly for me, and vanquish the evil beasts, that is, the alluring concupiscences, that peace may be made by thy power, and abundance of thy praise found in thy holy Court, which is a pure conscience. Command the winds and tempests: say unto the sea, Be still: and to the north wind, Blow not; and a great calm shall ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth: for I am empty and void earth, untill thou impartest thy light unto me. Poure out thy grace from above, wet my heart with heavenly dew, give waters of devotion, to wash the face of the earth,

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earth, to bring forth good and excellent fruit. Lift up my mind overcharged with the weight of Sinne: draw up thy whole desire to heavenly things, that having tasted the sweetness of celestial happiness, it may loath to think of earthly vanities.

6. Take me and deliver me from all unlasting comfort of creatures : for no created thing can fully quiet and comfort my desire. Joyne me unto thee with an unseparable band of love ; for thou only fillest the mind of him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are vain.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of flying curious inquiry of the
of others.

CHRIST. Son, be not anxious; trouble not thyself with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me, or I will be it to thee, whether thou mayest be such or no, or whether thou mayest do, or speak this or that? Thou sayest,

not heed to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold I know every one, and do see all things that are under the sunne : and do understand how it is with every one; what he thinketh, what he would, and at what his intention aimeth. All things therefore are to be committed unto me : but do thou keep thy self in good peace, and let the unquiet be as unquiet as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. With not the shadow of a great name, nor to be known to many, nor to have the private love of men : for these things breed distractions, and cause great darkness of heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the door of thy heart unto me. Be carefull and watch in prayer,

prayer, and humble thy self in all things.

CHAP. XXV.

*Wherein the firm peace of the heart,
and true profit consisteth.*

CHRIST. Son, I have said,
Peace I leave with you, my peace
I give to you: not as the world gi-
veth, do I give to you. All do de-
sire peace, but all care not for
those things that appertain unto
true peace. My peace is with the
humble, and meek of heart. Thy
peace shall be in much patience.
If thou wilt hear me and follow
my voyce, thou mayst enjoy much
peace.

CHRISTIAN. VVhat then
shall I do, Lord?

CHRIST. In every thing at-
tend unto thy self what thou doest,
and what thou sayest: and direct
thy whole intention unto this, that
thou mayst please me alone, and
desire or seek nothing out of me.
Of the sayings or doings of o-
thers, judge nothing rashly: neither

do thou intangle thy self with things not committed unto thee : and doing thus , it may be thou shalt be little or seldome troubled.

2 But never to feel any trouble at all, nor to suffer any grief of heart or body , is not the state of this life , but of everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow; nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary; nor that it is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or imagine thy self to be specially beloved , if thou be in great devotion and sweetness : for by these things a true lover of virtue is not known ; neither doth the profiting and perfection of man consist in having them.

3. CHRISTIAN. VVherein then, Lord ?

CHRIST. In offering thy self with all thy heart unto the will of God, not seeking thine own
inter-

interest, neither in great nor little, neither for a time nor for ever, so that with equal countenance thou mayest persist in thanksgiving, both in prosperity and in adversity, weighing all things with an equal balance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou preparest thy heart to suffer greater matters, and not justifiest thy self, as though thou oughtest not to suffer these and so great afflictions, but justifiest me in whatsoever I appoint, and praisest my holy name; then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace: and thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as thy banishment may permit.

CHAP. XXVI.

*Of the excellency of a free mind,
which humble prayer better
deserveth then reading.*

CH R I S T I A N. Lord, it is the work of a perfect man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to passe without care through many cares: not like a sluggard, but by the privilege of a free mind, adhering by inordinate affection to no creature.

2. I beseech thee, my most gracious God, preserve me from the cares of this life, lest I should be too much intangled thereby: and from the many necessities of the body, lest I should be enthralled by pleasure: from all hinderances of the soul, lest broken with troubles I should be dejected and dismayed. I fly not from those things, that worldly vanity so greatly desireth: but from those miseries, that as punishments do weigh down & hinder the soul of thy servant,
with

with the general course of mortality, that it cannot enter into liberty of spirit as often as it would.

3. O my God, the ineffable sweetness, embitter unto me all carnal comfort, which may draw me away from the love of eternal things, and wickedly allure me to it self by the beholding of some present delight. Let not flesh and bloud overcome me, O Lord. Let not the world and the short glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil and his subtil fraud supplant me. Give me strength to resist, patience to suffer, and constancy to persevere. Give me instead of all the comforts of the world the most sweet unction of thy spirit, and in lieu of carnal love pour into my soul the love of thy name.

4. Behold, meat, drink, clothes, and other necessities for the maintenance of the body, are burdensome unto a fervent spirit. Grant me to use such refreshments in due

measure, and not to be intangled with an over-great desire of them. It is not lawfull to renounce them wholly, for that nature is to be sustained: but to desire superfluities, and those things that do rather delight, thy holy law forbiddeth: for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein, I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

CHAP. XXVII.

That private love most hindereth from the chiefest Good.

CH R I S T. Son, thou oughtest to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thy self. Know, that the love of thy self doth hurt thee more than any thing in the world. According to the love, and affection thou bearest them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or lesse. If thy love be pure, simple, and well-ordered, thou shalt be free from the bondage of things. Covet not that which thou mayest not have. Be not willing to have
that

that which may hinder thee, and deprive thee of inward liberty. It is a wonderfull thing, that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottome of thy heart, with all things that thou canst desire, or have.

2. Why dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? Why art thou tired with needlesse cares? stand to my good will, and thou shalt feel no loss at all. If thou seekest this or that; and wouldest be here or there, to enjoy thine own commodity and pleasure; thou shalt never be in quiet, nor free from trouble of mind: for in every thing somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will cross thee.

3. Not every external thing therefore attained, and heaped together helpeth thee; but it rather availeth if thou despise it, and dost root it out from thy heart: which thou must not understand onely of thy revenues & wealth, but of the

desire of honour also, and vain praise; all which do pass away with this world. The place avail-eth little, if the spirit of fervour be wanting: neither shall that peace which is sought abroad long continue, if the state of thy heart be destitute of a true foundation: that is, unless thou stand stedfast in me, thou mayst change, but not better thy self. For, when occasion doth happen, thou shalt find that which thou soughtest to flye, and perhaps more.

A Prayer for cleansing the heart, and obtaining of heavenly wisdom.

4. CHRISTIAN. Confirm me, O Lord, with the grace of thy holy spirit. Give me to strengthen my inward man, and to purge my heart from all unprofitable care, and grief; not to be drawn away with sundry desires of any thing either mean or pretious, but to look upon all things as passing

sing away, and that my self do also pass away together with them: for nothing is permanent under the Sun, where all things are vanity, and affliction of mind. O how wise is he that so considereth them!

5. Grant me, Lord, heavenly wisdom, that I may learn above all things to seek and find thee, above all things to relish thee, and to love thee, and to think of all created things as they are, according to the disposition of thy wisdom. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flattereth me, and to suffer patiently him that contradicteth me. It is great wisdom not to be moved with every blast of words; not to give care to a flattering *Siren*, for so we shall go on securely in the way which we have begun.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Against the tongue of Slanderers.

CH R I S T. Son be not grieved if some think evil of thee, and speak that which thou wouldst not willingly hear. Thou oughtest to judge the worst of thy self, and to think no man weaker then thy self. If thou walk spiritually, thou wilt not much esteem of flying words. It is not small wisdome to be silent in time of evil, and inwardly to turn to me, and not to be troubled with the judgement of men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men. For whether they interpret well or evil, thou art not therefore another man. Where is true peace, and true glory? Is it not in me? And he that coveteth not to please men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquiet of heart, and distraction of the senses.

CHAP,

CHAP. XXIX.

*How we ought to call upon God, and
bless him, when tribulation
draweth near.*

CHRISTIAN. Blessed (O Lord) be thy name for ever; since it pleaseth thee that this temptation and tribulation should come upon me. I cannot fly it, but have need to fly to thee, that thou maist help me, and turn it to my good. Lord, I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me, I am much troubled with this present suffering. And now, dear Father, what shall I say? I am taken in narrow straits, save me in this hour. Yea therefore came I into this hour, that thou maist be glorified, when I shall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it please thee, Lord, to deliver me: for, poor wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither shall I go without thee? Grant patience, Lord, even this time also. Help me, my God, and then I will not fear
how

how much soever I be oppressed.

2. And now in this, what shall I say? Lord, thy will be done, I have well deserved to be afflicted and grieved. Surely I ought to bear it: and O that I could bear it with patience, until the tempest be passed over, and it become calm! But thy omnipotent hand is able to take even this temptation from me, and to assuage the violence thereof, that I utterly sink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done unto me, my God, my Mercy. And how much the more hard it is to me, so much the more easie is this change of the right hand of the most High.

CHAP. XXX.

Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.

CHRIST. Son, I am the Lord, that giveth comfort in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which most of all hindereth heavenly consolation, that

that thou art slow in turning thy self unto prayer. For before thou dost earnestly pray unto me, thou seekest in the mean while many comforts, and delightest thy self in outward things. And hence it comes to pass, that all doth little profit thee, until thou consider that I am he, that deliver those that trust in me: and that out of me there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counsel, nor lasting remedy. But now thou, having recovered breath after the tempest, gather strength again in the light of my mercies: for I am at hand, saith our Lord, to repair all, not only entirely, but also abundantly, and in a very plentiful measure.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him, that promiseth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and constant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time. Wait, wait for me, I will come and heal thee. It is a
tem-

temptation that vexeth thee : and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What else doth the care for future contingencies bring thee, but sorrow upon sorrow ? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.* It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never happen.

3. But it is incident to man, to be deluded with such imaginations : and a signe of a weak minde to be so easily drawn away by the suggestion of the enemy. For he careth not so he delude & deceive thee, whether it be true or false which he proposeth : whether he overthrow thee with the love of present, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy trust in my mercy. When thou thinkest thy self furthest off from me, oftentimes I am nearest unto thee. When thou judgest that almost all is lost, then oftentimes the greatest gain
and

and reward is at hand. All is not lost when any thing falleth out contrary. Thou must not judge according to that, which thou seelest for the present; nor give thy self over to any grief, from whence soever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy self wholly left, although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or withdrawn thy desired comfort: for this is the way to the kingdom of heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee, and the rest of my servants, that ye be exercised with adversities, then that ye should have all things according to your desires. I know the secret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy wellfare, that thou be left sometimes without taste [and feeling of] spiritual sweetness,] lest perhaps thou shouldest be puffed up with good success, and shouldest please thy self in that which thou art not.

That

That which I have given, I can take away, and restore it again when I please.

5. When I give it, it is mine: when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine: for mine is every good and every perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any cross whatsoever, repine not, nor let thy heart fail thee: I can quickly succour thee, and turn all thy heaviness into joy. Nevertheless I am just, and greatly to be praised, when I deal thus with thee.

6. If thou be wise, and considerest this rightly, thou wilt never mourn so dejectedly for any adversity that befallerh thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks: yea, to account this thy onely joy, that, afflicting thee with sorrows, I do not spare thee. *As my Father hath loved me, I also love you,* said I unto my beloved Disciples; whom certainly I sent not out to temporal joyes, but to great conflicts: not to honours, but to contempts:

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not to idleness, but to labours : not to rest, but to bring much fruit in patience. My Son, remember these words.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the contempt of all creatures , to find our Creator.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I stand in need of yet greater grace, if I must go so farr as that no man or creature can hinder me. For as long as any thing holdeth me , I cannot fly freely unto thee. He desired to fly with great liberty, that said, Who will give me wings like a dove , and I will fly and rest? What thing more quiet then a single eye ? And what more free , then he that desireth nothing upon earth ? Man ought therefore to ascend above all creatures, and perfectly to forsake himself, and to remain in excessse of mind, and to see that thou, who art the Maker of all things, hast nothing amongst creatures like unto thee. And unless a man be free from

from [the affection of] all creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things. And for this cause there are so few contemplative men to be found, for that few can wholly sequester themselves from things created and perishing.

2. Much grace is necessary to raise up the soul, and to enravish it above it self. And unless a man be raised up in spirit, and delivered from all creatures, and wholly united unto God, whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. A long while shall he be little, and lie groveling below, that esteemeth any thing great, but the one onely unmeasurable and eternal Good. For whatsoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wisdom of an illuminated and religious man, and the knowledge of a learned and studious Clerk. Far more noble is that learning, which

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which floweth from above from the divine influence, then that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man.

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavour not to exercise those things that are required thereunto. It is a great hinderance, that we rest in signes and things sensible, and have little of the perfect mortification. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called Spiritual, that we take so much pains, and so great care for transitory and base things, and scarce or seldome think of our own inward concernments, with full recollection of our senses.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break forth, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie: nor bewail the impurity and many faults that are in all our actions. For all flesh had

corrupted her way, and therefore did that general floud ensue. Since our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thereof be corrupted, as a signe of the want of inward vigour. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask how much one hath done, but how virtuous his actions are, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be strong, rich, beautiful, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer : but how poor he is in spirit, how patient and meek, how religious and inwardly good, is seldom spoken of. Nature respecteth the outward things of man, Grace turneth it self to the inward. That is often deceived : This hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.



CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

*of denial of our selves, and forsaking
all our affections.*

CHRIST. Son, thou canst not possess perfect liberty, unless thou wholly deny thy self. All proprietaries and lovers of themselves are bound in fetters, they are covetous, curious, wanderers, seekers of ease, and not of these things of Jesus Christ; but are oftentimes devising and framing that which will not continue. For all shall perish that proceedeth not from God. Keep this short and complete word: *Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest.* Consider this well; and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, this is not one dayes work, nor childrens sport: yea, in this short word, all the perfection of Religious persons is included.

P. CHRIST. Son, thou must
not

not go back, nor straitwayes be de-
 jected when thou hearest the way
 of the perfect; but rather be stirred
 up to higher things, or at least in
 desire to sigh after them. I would
 it were so well with thee, and thou
 wert come so far, that thou wert
 no longer a lover of thy self,
 but didst stand meerly at my beck,
 and at his whom I have appoint-
 ed a Father over thee: then
 thou shouldest exceedingly please
 me, and all thy life would pass
 away in joy and peace. Thou
 hast yet many things to forsake,
 which unless thou wholly re-
 signe up unto me, thou shalt not
 attain to that which thou desirest.
 I counsel thee to buy of me gold
 tryed in the fire, that thou mayst
 become rich, that is, heavenly
 wisdom, which treadeth under
 foot all base and earthly things.
 Set little by the wisdom of this
 world, and esteem not of the
 contentment of men, nor thine
 own fantasies.

3. I said, that thou shouldst buy the mean things, with precious things, and such as were with men of great esteem. For true heavenly wisdom seemeth mean and of small account, and is scarce thought of by men: for that esteemeth not highly of it self, nor seeketh to be magnified upon earth: which many praise from the teeth outward, but in their life they are farre from it; yet is it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing our small intentions unto God.

CHRIST. Son, trust not to thy affection: that which now is, will quickly change into another. As long as thou livest, thou art subject to mutability, even against thy will: so that now thou art merry, now sad; now quiet, now troubled; now devout, now undevout; now diligent now idle; now heavy, now light. But he that

is wise and well instructed in the spirit, standeth fast upon these mutable things, not heeding what he seeleth in himself, or which way the wind of instability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right and desired end. For thus he may continue one, and the self same, and unshaken in the midst of so many various events, directing alwayes the single eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, so much the more constantly doth he pass through the several kinds of stormes. But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth blinde, for it quickly looketh upon some delightful object that it meeteth withall. And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemish of seeking himself. So the Jews in times past came into Bethany to Martha and Mary, not for Jesus alone, but to see Lazarus

also

also. The eye of our intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be single and right, and to be directed unto me, beyond the manifold diversity of all mediums, and whatsoever objects come between.

CHAP. XXXIV.

*That God is sweet above all things,
and in all things, to him
that loveth.*

CHRISTIAN. Behold, my God, and all things. What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I desire? O sweet and savoury word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world, nor those things that are in the world. My God, and all things. Enough is said to him, that understandeth: and it is pleasant to him that loveth to repeat it often. For when Thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when thou art absent, all become irksome. Thou givest quiet of heart, and much peace, and pleasure.

sant joy. Thou makest men think well of all, and praise thee in all things: neither can any thing please long without thee: but if it be pleasant and gratefull, thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the sweetness of thy wisdom.

2. What is not savoury unto him to whom thou art savoury? And whom thou delightest not, what can be pleasant to him? But the wife of this world, and they that relish the things of the flesh, cannot attain to thy wisdom: for in the world is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proved to be truly wise: for they are changed from vanity to truth, from flesh to spirit. These relish God, and what good soever is found in creatures they wholly refer unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great, yea very great is the difference

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rence between the sweetness of the Creatour and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of light uncreated and of light enlightned.

3. O everlasting light, surpassing all created lights, dart the beams of thy brightness from above which may pierce all the most inward corners of my heart : purifie, rejoyce, clarifie, and quicken my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with excess of unspeakable joy. O when will that blessed and desired hour come, that I may be filled with thy presence, and thou maist be unto me all in all ! As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full joy. Alas ! the old man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth yet covet strongly against the spirit, and stirreth up inward warres, and suffereth not the kingdome of my soul to be in peace.

4. But thou that rulest the power of the sea, and asswagest the mo-

tion of its waves, rise and help me: scatter the people that desire warre, destroy them in thy might, display thy greatness, and let thy right hand be glorified: for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God.

CHAP. XXXV.

That there is no security from temptation in this life.

CH R I S T. Sonne, there is no security in this life: as long as thou livest, thou shalt alwaies have need of spiritual armour. Thou livest among enemies, and art assaulted on the right hand and on the left. If therefore thou defendest not thy self on every side with the shield of patience, thou canst not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not thy heart on me with a sincere will to suffer all things for me, thou canst not sustain the heat of this battel, nor obtain the triumphant reward of the Saints in blifs. Thou oughtest therefore manfully to go through all, and to

use

III. use a strong hand against whatsoever withstandeth thee. For to him that overcommeth is given Manna; and to the negligent is left much misery.

2. If thou seekest rest in this world, how wilt thou then attain to everlasting rest? Dispose not thyself to much ease, but to much patience. Seek true peace, not in earth, but in heaven; not in men, nor in any creature, but in God alone. Thou oughtest for the love of God willingly to undergo all things, even labours, griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, necessities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehensions, humiliations, confusions, corrections, and contempts: these help to vertue; these try a Novice of Christ: these make up an heavenly crown. I will give an everlasting reward for a short labour, and infinite glory for transitory shame.

3. Thinkest thou that thou shalt alwayes have spiritual consolations

tions at will? My Saints had not so; but many afflictions, and sundry temptations, and many discomforts: in all which they did bear up themselves patiently, and trusted rather in God than in themselves, knowing that the sufferings of this time are not worthy of obtaining future glory. Wilt thou have that straightwayes, which many after tears and great labours have hardly obtained; Wait upon the Lord, do manfully, be of good courage: fear not, do not fly, but with constancy expose both body and soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in most plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Against the vain judgements of men.

CHRIST. Sonne, fix thy heart stedfastly on God, and fear not the judgements of men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good
and

and happy thing to suffer in that sort : neither will it be burdensome to an humble heart , nor to him that trusteth rather in God, than in himself. The most part of men are given to talk much , and therefore little heed is to be given them: neither is it possible to satisfie all. Though the Apostle endeavoured to please all in the Lord, and made himself all things unto all, yet he little regarded that he was judged of mans judgement.

2. He did for the edification and salvation of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder but that he was sometimes judged and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, and defended himself with patience and humility against evil tongues, and such as thought vanities and lyes, and spake what they listed : Yet sometimes notwithstanding he answered , lest the weak might have

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CHRIST. Sonne, fix thy heart stedfastly on God, and fear not the judgements of men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good
and

and happy thing to suffer in that sort : neither will it be burdensome to an humble heart , nor to him that trusteth rather in God, than in himself. The most part of men are given to talk much , and therefore little heed is to be given them: neither is it possible to satisfie all. Though the Apostle endeavoured to please all in the Lord, and made himself all things unto all, yet he little regarded that he was judged of mans judgement.

2. He did for the edification and salvation of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder but that he was sometimes judged and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, and defended himself with patience and humility against evil tongues, and such as thought vanities and lyes, and spake what they listed : Yet sometimes notwithstanding he answered, lest the weak might have

received scandal by his silence.

3. VVho art thou that fearest a mortal man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not seen. Fear God, and the terrour of men shall not trouble thee. VVhat harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himself than thee: neither can he avoid the judgement of God, be he what he will. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the present thou seemest to fall down, and to suffer shame and confusion without desert, do not therefore repine, neither do thou lessen thy crown by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy eyes to me in heaven. I am able to deliver thee from all shame and wrong, and to render to every one according to their works.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

*of a full and pure resignation of our
selves, for the obtaining free-
dome of heart.*

CHRIST. Sonne, leave thy
self, and thou shalt find me.
Make no self-respecting choyce of
any thing, appropriate nothing to
thy self, and thou shalt ever be a
gainer. For greater grace shall
alwayes be given thee, when thou
dost perfectly resign thy self, and
not turn back to take thy self a-
gain.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, how
often shall I resign my self? and
wherein shall I forsake my self?

CHRIST. Alwayes, and in
every hour, as well in little things
as in great. I do except nothing, but
do require that thou be as it were
naked in all things. Otherwise
how canst thou be mine, and I
thine, unless both within & with-
out thou be free from all self-will?
And how much the sooner thou
dost this, so much the better able
shalt

shalt thou find thy self ; and how much the more fully and sincerely thou doest it , so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much the more shalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that resigne themselves, but with some exception; for they put not their whole trust in God, and therefore do labour to provide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed with temptations, do return again to that which they had left, & therefore they go not forward in the way of vertue. These shall not attain to the true liberty of a pure heart, nor to the favour of my sweetest familiarity; unlesse they first make an entire resignation, and offer themselves a daily sacrifice unto me. For without this there neither is nor can be the fruiteive union with me.

3. I have often said unto thee, & now again I say the same, Forsake thy self, resigne thy self, and thou shalt

Thou shalt enjoy great internal peace. Give all for all: seek nothing, require back nothing, stand purely and with a firm confidence in me, and thou shalt enjoy me. Thou shalt be free in heart, and darkness shall not have power over thee. Let this be thy whole endeavour, let this be thy prayer, let this be thy desire, that being stript of all propriety, thou mayst nakedly follow naked Jesus; and dying to thy self, mayst live eternally to me. Then shall vain fantasies, evil perturbations, and all superfluous cares fly away: then shall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love shall die.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of good government in outward things, and of recourse to God in dangers.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou oughtest with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or external business, thou be inwardly free and master of thy self, and

and that all things be under thee, and thou not under them; that thou mayst be lord and master of thy actions, not a servant or a hireling, but rather a freeman and a true Hebrew, passing into the lot and freedom of the sons of God, who standing upon the things that are present, view the things which are eternal; who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of heaven; whom temporal things cannot draw down to love of them, but they rather draw temporal things to serve to good purpose, as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creator of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain stedfast in all events, and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnal eye the things which thou seest and hearest; but presently in every occasion dost enter with Moses into the Tabernacle, to
ask

ask counsel of the Lord; thou shalt sometimes hear the divine Oracle, and shalt return instructed of many things both present and to come. Moses had alwayes recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of all doubts and obscure questions, and fled to the help of prayer, for the remedy of the iniquity and dangers of men. So oughtest thou in like manner to fly to the closet of thy heart, earnestly craving the Divine favour. For the Scripture testifieth, that therefore was Joshua and the children of Israel deceived by the Gibeonites, because they consulted not first with God, but giving too lightly credit to fair words, were deluded with counterfeit piety.

CHAP. XXXIX.

That a man be not over-earnest in his affairs.

CHRIST. Son, alwayes commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time: expect my ordering of it, and thou shalt find

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finde it will be for thy good.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I do most willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can profit little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my self with all readines of mind to thy good pleasure.

2. CHRIST. Son, oftentimes a man doth earnestly labour for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind; for mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do pass from one to another. It is therefore no small thing for a man to forsake himself even in the smallest things.

3. The true spiritual profiting of man consisteth in denying himself: and he that is thus resigned, liveth in great freedome and security. But the old enemy, who alwayes sets himself against all that are good, ceaseth at no time from tempting, but day and night lieth grievously in wait, to cast the unwary,

wary, if he can, into the snare of deceit. Watch therefore and pray, saith our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.

CHAP. XL.

*That man hath no good of himself,
nor any thing whereof he
can glory.*

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou vouchsafest to visit him? What hath man deserved, that thou shouldest give him thy grace? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsake me? Or if thou doest not that which I desire, what can I justly say against it? Surely, this I may truly think and say, Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of my self, but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing: and unless thou help me, and dost inwardly instruct me, I become altogether cold, and fall to pieces.

2. But

2. But thou, O Lord, art alwayes the same, and endurest for ever; alwayes good, just, and holy, doing all things well, justly, and holily, and disposing all things with wisdom. But I that am more inclined to fall, then to go forward, do not ever continue in one estate: for seven different times are changed over me; yet doth it soon turn to the better, when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the favour of man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed, but my heart shall be turned to thee alone, and there shall rest.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forsake all humane comfort, either for the attaining of devotion, or for mine own necessity, which inforceth me to seek after thee (for none else can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce in the gift of new consolation.

4. Thanks

4. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me : but I am meer vanity, and nothing before thee, an unconstant and weak man. Whereof then can I glory? Or why do I desire to be esteemed of? Is it not of nothing? And this is most vain. Truly vain-glory is an evil plague, and a very great vanity : because it draweth man from true glory, and robbeth him of heavenly grace. For whilst a man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee : whilst he gapeth after the praise of men, he is deprived of true virtues.

5. But true glory, and holy exultation and joy, is for a man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to rejoyce in thy name, and not in his own virtue, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praised be thy name, not mine : magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy name be blessed, but to me let no part of mens praises be given.

Thou

Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day ; but for my self I will not joy, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the Jews seek the glory which one man giveth to another: I will desire this which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporal honour, all worldly highness, compared to thy eternal glory, is vanity and folly. O my truth, my mercy, my God, most Blessed Trinity, to thee alone be all praise, honour, virtue, and glory for all eternity.

CHAP. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporal honours.

CH R I S T. Sonne, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honoured and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in heaven, and the contempt of men in earth will not grieve thee,

CH R I S T I A N. Lord, we
are

are blinde, and quickly seduced with vanity. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take armes against me: for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honour, and glory. And unless I do so prepare my self, that I am ready with a very good will to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all, I cannot obtain internal strength and peace, nor be spiritually enlightned, nor fully united unto thee.

CHAP. XLII.

*That our peace is not to be placed
in men.*

CHRIST. Son, if the peace thou hast with any, be grounded on the opinion which thou hast of him, or on the contentment thou receivest in his company, thou shalt ever be in an unconstant and enthralled condition: but if thou have recourse unto the ever-living and eternal Truth, a friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to rest in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be whom thou thinkest well of, and is very dear unto thee in this life. No friendship can avail or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of men. Man approcheth so much the near-

er unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all earthly comfort : so much the higher also he ascendeth unto God by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how much the viler he is in his own sight.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himself, hindereth the coming of God's grace into him ; for the grace of the holy Ghost ever seeketh an humble heart. If thou couldest perfectly annihilate thy self, and empty thy self of all created love, then should I flow into thee with great abundance of grace. When thou castest thy eyes on creatures, the sight of thy Creator is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy self in all things, for the love of thy Creator ; and then shalt thou be able to attain to divine knowledge. How little soever it be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded, it defileth the soul, and hindereth the enjoying of the chiefest good.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIII.

Against vain and secular knowledge.

CHRIST. Son, let not the fair speeches, and subtile sayings of men move thee. For the Kingdome of God consisteth not in word, but in power. Observe well the words which I speak: for they enflame hearts, and enlighten minds, they cause compunction, and bring sundry comforts. Do thou never read to shew thy self learned or wise, but labour to mortifie thy sins; for that will profit thee more then the knowledge of many difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things, thou oughtest ever to return to that one beginning and first Principle. I am he, that teacheth man knowledge, and give to the little ones a more clear understanding,

ing, then can be taught by man. He therefore, to whom I speak, shall quickly be wise, and shall profit much in the spirit. Wo be to them that enquire many curious things of men, and do little desire to know the way how to serve me. The time will come, when the Master of masters shall appear, Christ the Lord of Angels, to hear the lessons of all, that is, to examine the consciences of every one: and then he will search Jerusalem with a candle, and the hidden things of darkness shall be laid open, and the reasonings of mens tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant do raise up the humble minde to understand more of the nature of the eternal truth, then can be gotten by ten years study in the schools. I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without ambition of honour, without the scuffling of arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise
M earthly

earthly things, to lothe things present, to seek the everlasting, to relish the things that are eternal, to fly honours, to suffer scandals, to place all hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and above all things ardently to love me.

4. For one by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and spake wonders: he profited more in forsaking all things, then in studying subtilties. To some I speak ordinary things, to others things more rare; to some I appear sweetly by signes and figures, but to some I reveal mysteries with much light. The voice of books is one, but it teacheth not all men alike. For I am the internal Teacher of the Truth, I am the searcher of the heart, the understander of the thoughts, the setter forwards of good actions, distributing to every one according to my will.

CHAP. XLIV.

Of not drawing outward things to our selves.

CHRIST. Son, in many things thou oughtest to be ignorant, and esteem thy self as dead upon earth, and as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou must also pass over many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is more profitable to turn thine eyes from the sight of unpleasing things, and to leave unto every one his own opinion, then to strive with contentious words. If thou standest well with God, and considerest his judgements, thou shalt the more easily bear, if thou be overcome.

2. CHRISTIAN. O Lord, to what an estate are we come ! Behold, we bewail a temporal loss, and for a little gain we toil and run, and the spiritual damage of our soul is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind. That

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M 2 which

which little or nothing profiteth, is minded, and that which is chiefly necessary, is negligently passed over, because man doth altogether fall down into external things; and unless he quickly repent, he lyeth immerst in them, and that willingly.

CHAP. XLV.

That credit is not to be given to all men: and how prone man is to offend in words,

CHRISTIAN. Help me, Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the help of man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith, where I thought it sure? And how often have I found faith, where I least expected it? It is vain therefore to trust in men; but the safety of the just, O Lord, is in thee. Blessed be thou, my Lord God, in all things that befall us. We are weak and inconstant, quickly deceived, and soon changed.

2. Who is he, that in all things so warily

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Chap. 45.

Pattern.

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warily and circumspectly keeps himself, that he never falls into any deceit or perplexity? But he that trusteth in thee, O Lord, and seeketh thee with a pure heart, doth not so easily fall; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much inthrall'd, yet he shall quickly be deliver'd or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithful in all his friends distress: but thou, O Lord, thou alone art most faithful at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

2. O how wise was that holy soul that said, My minde is firmly settled and grounded in Christ! If it were so with me, then would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor the darts of words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware before-hand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can

M 3

things

things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously? But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable wretch? Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But we are men, weak and frail men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the Truth, that neither dost deceive, nor canst be deceived. And on the other side, every man is a liar, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words: and therefore we must not easily give credit even to that which in outward shew seemeth at the first to be right.

4. O with what wisdom hast thou warned us to take heed of men! And because the enemies of man are his familiar and domestic acquaintance, not to trust, if one should say, Behold here, or behold there. I am taught to my cost, and O that I might thereby increase my care, and not my folly.

Be

Be wary, faith one, be wary, keep to thy self what I tell thee : and whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way. From such tales, and such improvident persons protect me, Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such things. Give me to observe truth and constancy in my words, and remove far from me a deceitful tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good and quiet a thing it is to be silent of others, nor to believe all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard ; to lay ones self open to few ; alwayes to seek after thee who art the beholder of the heart ; not to be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to thy will

and pleasure. How safe is it for the keeping of heavenly grace, to fly the sight of men, and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life, and encrease of zeal!

6. To how many hath virtue known & over-hastily commended, been hurtful? How profitable hath grace been kept with silence in this mortal life, which is nothing but a temptation, and a warfare?

CHAP. XLVI.

Of putting our trusting in God when evil words arise.

CHRIST. Son, be constant, and put thy trust in me. For what are words but words? They pass through the air, but hurt not so much as a stone. If thou be guilty, determine willingly to amend thy self: if thou be innocent, resolve to suffer this willingly for the sake of God. It is but a small matter

matter to suffer sometimes a few words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure hard stripes. And why do small matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnal, and regardest men more than thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, but seekest the shades of excuses.

2. But look better into thy self, and thou shalt see that the world yet liveth in thee, and a vain affection to please men. For when thou refusest to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is evident that thou art neither truly humble, nor truly dead to the world, nor the world perfectly crucified to thee. But give diligent care to my words, and thou shalt little respect ten thousand words spoken by men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee that could be most maliciously invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to

pass, and madeſt no more reckoning of it then of a mote? could all those words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath not his heart within him, nor God before his eyes, is easily moved with a word of dispraise; when as he that trusteth in me, and trusteth not in his own judgment, shall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the discerner of all secrets: I know how the matter passed, I know him that offereth the injury, and him that suffereth it. From me hath this word proceeded: this hath hapned by my permission, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. I shall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a secret judgement I would before-hand try them both.

4. The testimony of men oftentimes deceiveth: but my judgement is true, it shall stand, and not be overthrown. It is commonly hidden and secret, and not known

in every thing, but to few: notwithstanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the foolish it seems not right. Men ought therefore to return to me in every judgement, and not to lean to their own opinions. For the just man will not be troubled, whatsoever befallerh him from God: and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth against him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he that searcheth the heart and reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the judgement of men is commendable.

5. CHRISTIAN. O Lord, God, the just Judge, strong and patient, thou who knowest the frailty and pravity of man; be thou my strength, and all my trust, for mine own conscience sufficeth me not.

Thou

Thou knowest that which I know not, and therefore in every reprehension I ought to have humbled myself, and to have borne it meekly : vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater sufferance. For thy rich mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, then my conceived justice for the defence of my hiddē conscience. Although I know nothing by my self, yet I cannot hereby justifie my self ; for if thy mercy be away, no man living shall be justified in thy sight.

CHAP. XLVII.

That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting.

CHRIST. Son, let not the pains dismay thee which thou hast undertaken for me, neither be thou discomforted for the tribulations which do besal thee ; but let my promise strengthen and comfort thee in all events. I am able to reward thee above all measure.

Thou

Thou shalt not long toil here, nor
alwayes be oppressed with grief,
Wait a while, and thou shalt see a
speedy end of thy evils. There
will come an hour when all labour
and trouble shall cease. Little and
short is all that passeth away with
time.

2. Do as thou doest, labour faith-
fully in my vineyard, I will be thy
reward. Write, read, sing, mourn,
keep silence, pray, suffer crosses
manfully: life everlasting is worthy
of all these and greater combats.
Peace shall come in the day which
is known unto the Lord, and it
shall not be day nor night, to wit,
of this time, but everlasting light,
infinite brightness, steadfast peace,
and secure rest. Then thou shalt
not say, Who shall deliver me from
the body of this death? Nor cry,
Wo be unto me, for that my dwel-
ling in a strange countrey is pro-
longed! For death shall be thrown
down, and health shall be without
decay, no anxiety, blessed joy,
sweet

sweet and glorious company.

3. If thou hadst seen the everlasting crowns of the Saints in heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce, who in times past were contemptible to this world, and esteemed unworthy of life itself, truly thou wouldest presently humble thy self even unto the earth, and wouldest rather seek to be under the feet of all, then to have command so much as over one : neither wouldest thou desire the pleasant dayes of this life, but rather rejoyce to be afflicted for God, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be reputed as nothing amongst men.

4. O, if thou hadst a relishing of these things, and didst suffer them to enter into the depth of thy heart, how durst thou so much as once to complain ? Are not all painful labours to be endured for everlasting life ? It is no small matter to lose or to gain the Kingdom of heaven. Lift up thy face there-

therefore unto heaven : behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are secure, now do rest, and shall remain with me everlastingly in the Kingdom of my Father.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Of the everlasting day, and shortness of this life.

CHRISTIAN. O most blessed mansion of the heavenly City ! O most clear day of Eternity, which night obscureth not, but the highest Truth ever enlighteneth ; day ever pleasant, ever secure, and never changing into a contrary state ! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporal things were at an end ! To the Saints it shineth glistering with everlasting brightness, but to those that are Pilgrims upon earth, it appeareth only afar off, and as it were through a glass.

2. The Citizens of heaven do
know

know how joyful that day is : but the banished children of Eve bewail the bitterness and tediousness of this. The dayes of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and anguish ; where man is defiled with many sins, incumbred with many passions , disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, intangled with many vanities, compassed about with many errors, worn away with many labours , vexed with temptations, weakned with delights, tormented with want.

3. O when shall these evils be at an end ! When shall I be delivered from the miserable bondage of sin ! When shall I think, O Lord, of thee alone. When shall I fully rejoyce in thee ! When shall I be free from all impediments in true liberty, without all grief of minde and body ! When shall I have solid peace, peace secure and without trouble, peace within and without,

without, peace every way assured!
O good Jesus, when shall I stand
to behold thee? When shall I con-
template the glory of thy King-
dome! When wilt thou be unto
me All in all! O when shall I be
with thee in thy Kingdome, which
thou hast prepared for thy beloved
from before all worlds! I am left a
poore and banished man in the
land of mine enemies, where there
are daily warres, and great cala-
mities.

4. Comfort my banishment,
asswage my sorrow; for my whole
desire sigheth after thee. For all
is burdensome to me, whatsoever
this world offereth for my com-
fort. I long to enjoy thee inward-
ly, but I cannot attain unto it. I
would gladly fix my heart on the
things of heaven, but temporall
things and unmortified passions
weigh me down. In mind I would
be above all things, but to my
flesh I am inforced to be subject
against my will. Thus unhappy
man

man that I am , I fight against my self , and am become grievous to my self, whilst my spirit seeketh to be above , and my flesh to be below.

5. O what do I inwardly suffer, when in my mind I consider heavenly things, and presently in my prayers a multitude of fleshly fantasies present themselves before me! My God be not farre from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy servant. Cast forth thy lightning, and disperse them : send out thy darts , and break all the imaginations which my enemy casts in. Gather my senses together unto thee, make me forget all the things of this world : grant me to cast away speedily the imaginations of wickedness. Succour me, O everlasting Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come heavenly sweetness and let all impurity flie from thy face. Pardon me also , and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in prayer.

prayer. I truly confesse, that I am wont to be subject to many distractions : for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally stand, or sit ; but rather there , whither my thoughts do carry me. Where my thought is, there am I : there is oftentimes my thought , where my affection is. That quickly offereth it self unto me, which is naturally delightfome, and by custome pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art Truth it self hast plainly said, Where thy treasure is, there is also thy heart. If I love heaven, I willingly think of heavenly things If I love the world, I rejoyce at the felicity of the world, and grieve for the adversity thereof. If I love the flesh , I imagine oftentimes those things that are pleasing to the flesh : if I love the spirit, I delight to think of spirituall things. For whatsoever I love , thereof do I willingly speak , and heare , and carry home with me the forms and
repre-

representations thereof. O blessed is that man, that for thee, O Lord, dismisseth all creatures, that violently resisteth nature, and out of the fervour of spirit crucifieth the lusts of the flesh: that so with a serene conscience he may offer pure prayers unto thee, and be worthy to be admitted into the Angelicall quire, all earthly things outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

CHAP. XLIX

Of the desires of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.

CHIRST. Sonne, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting blisse to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou maist without shadow of turning, behold my brightness; open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole desire. Give greatest thanks
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to the heavenly goodneſſe, that
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thee up fervently, holdeth thee up
powerfully, leſt through thine own
weight thou fall down to the
things of earth. Neither doſt thou
obtain this by thine own thought
or endeavour, but by the onely fa-
vour of heavenly grace and divine
bounty, that thou maiſt improve
in holineſſe, and obtain greater hu-
mility, and prepare thy ſelf to fu-
ture battels, and endeavour to
cleave unto me with the whole af-
fection of thy heart, and ſerve me
with a fervent deſire,

2. Sonne, fire often burneth, but
the flame aſcendeth not with-
out ſmoke: ſo likewise the deſires
of ſome men burn towards hea-
venly things, and yet they are not
free from temptation of carnall
affection: and therefore it is not
altogether purely for the honour
of God that which they ſo earneſt-
ly requeſt of him. Such is alſo
often-

ostentines thy desire, which thou hast pretended to be so serious. For that is not pure and perfect, which is tinctured with the love of thine own proper commodity and interest.

3. Ask not that which is delightfull and profitable to thee, but that which is gratefull to me, and appertaineth to my honour: for if thou judgest aright, thou oughtest to prefer and follow my appointment, rather then thine own desire, or any desired thing. I know thy desire, & have heard thy often groanes. Now thou wouldest be in the freedome of the glory of the Sonnes of God: now doth the everlasting habitation, and the heavenly Countrey full of joy delight thee, but this houre is not yet come: it is yet another time, to wit, a time of warre, a time of labour and triall. Thou desirest to be filled with the chiefeest good, but thou canst not attain it for the present. I am he, saith the Lord, waite
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4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon earth, and to be exercised in many things. Comfort shall be sometimes given thee, but abundant fulnesse thereof shall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be valiant as well in doing as in suffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughtest to put on the new man, and to be changed into another man. Thou must oftentimes do that which thou wouldest not, & leave undone that thou wouldest do. That which is pleasing to others, shall go well forwards: that which thou wishest, shalt not speed. That which others say, shall be heard: what thou saist, shall be nothing regarded. Others shall ask and shall receive: Thou shalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the praise of men, but of thee there shall be no speech; to others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt

shall be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will sometimes repine, and it is much if thou endurest it with silence. In these and many such like, a faithfull servant of the Lord is wont to be tried, how he can deny and break himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou hast such need to mortifie thy self, as in seeing and suffering those things that are contrary to thy will; especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or lesse profitable. And for that thou being placed under authority, darest not resist higher power, therefore it seemeth hard unto thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave all thine own opinion.

6. But consider, Sonne, the fruit of these labours, the end near at hand, & the reward above all measure, & thou shalt receive no grief thereby, but great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that
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little of thy will, which now thou willingly forsakest, thou shalt alwayes have thy will in heaven. There thou shalt have all that thou wilt or cāst desire, there thou shalt enjoy all good without fear of losing it; there shall thy will be ever one with me; it shall desire nothing outward or strange and private; there no man shall withstand thee, no man complain of thee, no man hinder thee, nothing come against thee: but all things desired shall be there together present, & refresh thy whole affection, and fill it up to the highest degree: there I will give thee glory for the reproach which here thou sufferedst, a garment of praise for heaviness: for the lowest place a kingly Throne for ever: there shall the fruit of obedience appear, the labour of repentance rejoyce, and humble subjection shall be gloriously crowned.

7. Now therefore bow thy self with great humility under the
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hands of all , and regard not who said or commanded this ; but take great heed , that whether thy Superiour, or thy inferiour , or thine equal , require any thing of thee, or do insinuate their desire, thou take it all in good part , and endeavour to fulfill it with a sincere will. Let one seek this , another that : let him glory in this, the other in that , and be praised a thousand thousand times ; but do thou neither rejoyce in this , nor in that, but in the contempt of thy self, and onely in my good pleasure and honour. This art thou to wish; that whether it be by life or death, God may be alwayes glorified in thee.

CHAP. L.

How a desolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.

CHRISTIAN. Lord God, Holy Father , thy holy name be now and for ever blessed because as thou wilt , so

it done, and what thou doest, is good: Let thy servant rejoyce in thee, not in himself, nor in any thing else; for thou alone art the true gladnesse, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord. What hath thy servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his? Thine is all that thou hast given, and whatsoever thou hast made. I am poore, and in labours from my youth: and sometimes my soul is heavy even unto tears; sometimes also it is troubled in it self, by reason of passions which rise against her.

2. I desire the joy of peace, I crave the peace of thy children that are fed by thee in the light of comfort. If thou give peace, if thou infuse holy joy; the soul of thy servant shall be full of mirth, and shall become devout in thy praise: but if thou withdraw thy self, as very often thou art wont, he will not be able to runne the

wayes of thy commandments, but rather he boweth his knees, and knocketh his breast, for it is not with him, as it was yesterday, and the day before, when thy light shined upon his head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the houre is come, that thy servant is to be proved! Behold dear Father, it is fit that in this houre thy servant suffer something for thee. O Father worthy of eternal honour, the hour is come: which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come: that for a short time thy servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee: he should be a little despised, and humbled, and made as an abject in the sight of men, and much afflicted with passions and infirmities; that he may rise again with thee, in the morning of the new light, and be glori-

glorified in heaven. Holy Father, thou hast so appointed it, and wilt have it so: and this is fulfilled which thy self hast commanded.

4. It is a favour to thy friend to suffer, and to be afflicted in the world for love of thee, how often soever, and by whomsoever thou permittest it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to passe, either without thy counsell, without thy providence, or without a cause why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast humbled me, that I may learn thy righteous judgements, and cast away all haughtinesse of heart, and presumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath covered my face, that I may rather seek to thee for comfort then to men. I have learned also hereby to dread thy unsearchable judgement; that afflict-est the just with the wicked, but not without equity and justice.

5. I give thee thanks, for that thou hast not spared my sinnes, but

hast worn me away with bitter stripes, inflicting sorrows, & sending griefs within and without. There is none under heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Physician of souls, that strikest and healest, bringest down to hell and bringest back again: let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod instruct me.

6. Behold, beloved Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my self under the rod of thy correction: strike my back and my neck too, that my crookednesse may be conformed to thy will. Make me an holy & humble discipline of thine, as thou art wont well to do, that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine pleasure. I commend my self and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, then hereafter. Thou knowest all and every thing, and there is nothing in the conscience of man which can be hidden from thee.

thee. Before things are done, thou knowest that they will come to passe, and hast no need that any should teach thee, or admonish thee of those things which are done on earth. Thou knowest what is expedient for my good, and how much tribulation is fit for purging the rust of my finnes. Do with me according to thy desired good pleasure, and despise not my sinfull life, better and more clearly known to none then to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which is to be known, to love that which is to be loved, to praise that which pleaseth thee most, to esteem that which is precious unto thee, to despise that which is contemptible in thy sight : suffer me not to judge according to the sight of the exteriour eyes, nor to give sentence according to the hearing of the eares of ignorant men : but to discern of visible and spiritual things with a true judg-

ment, and above all things ever to search after thy good will and pleasure.

8. The senses of men are often deceived in their judging; the lovers of the world are also deceived in loving onely visible things. What is a man the better, for that he is esteemed great by man? The deceitfull in exalting the deceitfull, the vain man in extolling the vain, the blind in commending the blind, the weak in magnifying the weak, deceiveth him, and doth verily more shame him, while he doth vainly praise him. For how much every one is in thy sight, so much he is, and no more, saith humble S. Francis.



CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

That a man ought to imploy himself in works of Humility, when strength is wanting for higher imployments.

CH R I S T. Sonne, thou art not able alwayes to continue in the fervent desire of goodness, nor to persist in the higher pitch of contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessity by reason of original corruption descend to inferior things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though against thy will and with grief. As long as thou carriest a mortall body, thou shalt feel trouble and heavinesse of heart. Thou oughtest therefore in the flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh: for that thou canst not alwayes continue in spiritual exercises and divine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie to humble and exterior

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works,

works, and to refresh thy self with good actions; to expect with a firm confidence my coming and heavenly visitation, to bear patiently thy banishment and the drinelle of thy mind, till I visit thee again, and deliver thee from all anxieties. For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietnesse. I will lay open before thee the pleasant fields of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou maist begin to runne the way of my commandments. And thou shalt say, that the sufferings of this time are not worthy of the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.

CHAP. LII.

That a man ought to esteems himself unworthy of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spiritual visitation, and therefore thou dealest justly with me, when thou leavest

leavest me poore and desolate. For though I could shed a sea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and sinned in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou O gracious and mercifull God, who wilt not that thy works should perish, to shew the riches of thy goodness upon the vessels of mercy, even beyond his desert vouchsafest to comfort thy servant above humane measure. For thy comforts are not like to the words of men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldest bestow any heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have ever done any good, but have been alwayes prone to sinne, & slow to amendment. It is true, and I cannot deny it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldst

wouldst stand against me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deserved for my finnes, but hell and everlasting fire? I confesse in very truth that I am worthy of all scorn and contempt, and it is unfit that I should be remembred amongst thy devoted ones. And although I be unwilling to hear this, yet notwithstanding for the truths sake I will lay open my finnes against my self that I may the better obtain mercy of thee.

3. What shall I say being guilty and full of all confusion? I can utter no other word but this, I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned: have mercy on me, pardon me, suffer me a little, that I may bewail my griefs, before I go unto the land of darkness, a land covered with the shadow of death. What dost thou so much require of a guilty and miserable sinner, as that he be contrite, and humble himself for his offences? In true contrition and humbling

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humbling of the heart, is bred a hope of forgivenesse; a troubled conscience is reconciled again, grace lost is restored. man is defended from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent soul meet together with an holy kisse.

4. Humble contrition for sinnes is an acceptable sacrifice unto thee, O Lord. favouring much sweeter in thy presence then the perfume of frankincense. This is also the pleasant ointment, which thou wouldst have powred upon thy sacred feet: for thou never desisest a contrite and humbled heart. There is the place of refuge, from the angry face of the enemy; there is amended, and washed away whatsoever elsewhere was polluted and defiled.

CHAP. LIII.

*That the grace of God is not given to
those that savour of earthly
things.*

CHRIST. Sonne, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with external things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hinderances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather poure out devout prayers unto God, that thou maist keep thy mind compunct, and thy conscience pure. Esteem the whole world as nothing; preferre attendance upon me before all outward things: for thou canst not attend upon me, and be delighted also in transitory vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends, and to keep thy mind deprived of all temporal comfort. So the blessed
Apostle

Apostle Peter required, that the faithfull of Christ should keep themselves as strangers and pilgrimes in this world.

2. O how great a confidence shall he have at the houre of death, whom no affection to any earthly thing detaineth in the world. But the sickly mind is not yet capable of so retired a heart; neither doth the carnall man understand the liberty of him who is inwardly recollected. Notwithstanding if he will be truly spiritual, he ought to renounce as well those which are farre off, as those which are near unto him; and to beware of no man more then of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with more ease subdue the rest. It is a perfect victory to triumph over our selves. For he that keepeth himself subject in such sort, that his sensuality be subdued to reason, and reason in all things be obedient to me, he is truly a conquerour of himself, & Lord of the world.

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3. If thou desire to mount unto this height, thou must begin manfully, and set the axe to the root, that thou maist pluck up and destroy thy hidden inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and earthly good. Of this sinne (that man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is thoroughly to be overcome: which evil being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillity. But for that few endeavour perfectly to die unto themselves, and altogether to forsake themselves, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves; but he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all evil and inordinate affections, and not earnestly adhere unto any creature by private love.

CHAP. LIV.

*of the different motions of Nature,
and Grace.*

CHRIST. Sonne, mark diligently the motions of Nature, and Grace: for in very contrary & subtill manner these are moved, & can hardly be discerned but by him that is spirituall and inwardly enlightned. All men indeed desire that which is good, and pretend some good in their words and deeds: and therefore under the shew of good, many are deceived. Nature is deceitfull, and seduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and alwayes proposeth her self for her end: but Grace walketh in simplicity, and avoideth all shew of evil, pretendeth not deceits, and doth all things purely for Gods sake, in whom also she finally resteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, nor be kept down, nor be overcome, nor be subject to any, nor be subdued: but Grace laboureth to mortifie

mortifie her self, resisteth sensuality, seeketh to be subject, is willing to be overcome, and will not use her own liberty: she loveth to be kept under discipline, and desireth not to rule any, but alwayes to live and remain wholly subject unto God, and for God is ready humbly to bow unto all men. Nature striveth for her own commodity, and considereth what profit she may reap by another, but Grace considereth not what is profitable and commodious unto her self, but rather what is profitable to many. Nature willingly receiveth honour and reverence: but Grace faithfully attributeth all honour and glory unto God.

3. Nature feareth shame and contempt, but Grace rejoiceth to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus. Nature loveth idlenesse and bodily rest: but Grace cannot be idle, but willingly inbraceth labour. Nature seeketh to have those things that be curious and glorious,

rious, abhorreth that which is mean and base, but Grace delighteth in plain and humble things, despiseth not rough things, nor refuseth to wear that which is old & torn. Nature respecteth the things of this world, rejoyceth at earthly gain, sorroweth for losse, is moved with every little injurious word: but Grace thinketh on that which is everlasting, and cleaveth not to temporal things: she is not troubled, with losse, nor disquieted with hard words, for that she hath placed her treasure and joy in heaven, where nothing perisheth.

4. Nature is covetous, and doth more willingly receive then give, she loveth proper and private things: but grace is bountifull and liberall to all: avoideth singularity, is content with a little, thinketh it happier to give then to receive. Nature is bent to the creatures, to her own flesh, to vanities, and to many vagaries: but Grace draweth unto God and unto goodness,

ness, renounceth creatures, flieth the world, hateth desires of the flesh, restraineth wandrings abroad, blusheth to be seen in publick. Nature is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may delight her senses: but Grace seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. Nature worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits she hopeth to obtain either that which is equal, or better, either praise or favour; and covereth to have her works and gifts much esteemed: but Grace seeketh no temporal thing, nor asketh any other reward for her deserts than God alone, nor desireth more of temporal necessities, than what may serve her for the obtaining of things eternall.

6. Nature rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, she gloryeth of noble place and birth,
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pleaseth the powerfull, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth those that are like herself: but Grace loveth even her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends; nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyed with greater virtue; she rather favour-eth the poore then the rich, hath more compassion of the innocent then the powerfull, rejoyceth in the true, not in the deceitfull, alwayes exhorteth good men to labour for the better gifts, and by goodness to resemble the Son of God. Nature quickly complaineth of want and trouble: Grace constantly endureth need.

7. Nature turneth all things to herself, striveth and contendeth for herself: but Grace reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed: she ascribeth no good to herself, neither doth she arrogantly presume: she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others, but in every apprehension

sion and understanding submitteth her self unto the eternal wisdom, and to the divine judgement. Nature coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news ; she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by the experience of her own senses ; she desireth to be known, and to do these things, for which she may be praised and admired ; but Grace careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters, for that all this springeth from the old corruption of man; seeing here is nothing new and durable upon earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration, and of every thing and every knowledge to seek profitable fruit and the praise and honour of God: she will not have her self nor hers publickly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his gifts, who of mere love bestoweth all things.

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8. This grace is a supernaturall light, and a certain special gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledge of everlasting salvation, which lifteth up a man from earthly things to love the things of heaven, and of a carnal maketh him a spiritual person. How much the more therefore nature is depressed and subdued, so much the greater grace is infused, and the inward man daily by new visitations more reformed, according to the image of God.

CHAP. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.

CHRISTIAN. O Lord my God, who hast created me to thy Image and likenesse, grant me this grace which thou hast shewed to be so great, and so necessary to salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature,

nature, which draweth me to sinne, and to perdition. For I feel in my flesh the law of sinne, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the obeying of sensuality in many things: neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy holy grace fervently infused into my heart, do assist me.

2. Thy grace O Lord, and great grace is needfull, that nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by Adam the first man, being fallen & corrupted by sinne, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all mankind, in such sort, that nature it self which by thee was created good, and without defect, is now accounted for the sinne and for the infirmity of a corrupted nature, for that the motion thereof left unto it self draweth to evil and to inferiour things. For the little power which remaineth, is like a certain spark lying hiddē in ashes.

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light in thy law, knowing thy com-
mandments to be good, just, and
holy, reproving also all evil & sin,
teaching that it is to be fled. But
in my flesh I serve the law of sinne,
whilst I rather obey sensuality
then reason. Hence it is, that I
have a will to do good, but know
not how to perform it. For this
cause I often purpose many good
things, but for that I want grace to
help my infirmity, for a light resi-
stance I go back and faint. I know
the way of perfection, and see
clearly enough what I ought to do;
but pressed with the weight of
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mine own corruption, I rise not unto what is more perfect.

4. O Lord, how exceeding needfull is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accomplish it? For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth strengthen me. O heavenly grace indeed, without which our own works are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed. Arts, riches, beauty and strength, wit, or eloquence are of no worth with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and evil, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love, wherewith being marked, they are esteemed worthy of everlasting life. This grace so much excelleth, that neither the gift of prophesie, nor the working of miracles, nor any speculation, how high soever, is of any esteem without it. Neither faith, nor hope, nor other virtues

are acceptable unto thee without love and grace.

5. O most blessed Grace, that maketh the poore in spirit rich in virtues, and makest the rich in many blessings to be humble in heart, come, come down unto me, replenish me early with thy comfort, lest my soul should faint for wearinesse and drinesse of mind. I beseech thee, Lord, that I may find grace in thy sight, for thy grace sufficeth, though other things that nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evils, whilest thy grace is with me: she is my strength, she giveth advise and help, she is stronger then all enemies, and wiser then all the wise.

6. Thy grace is the mistresse of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction: she driveth away sorrow, she expelleth fear, she is the nurse of devotion, the mother of tears.

What am I without it, but a rotten piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk onely meet to be cast away? Let thy grace therefore, O Lord, alwayes prevent me, and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Jesus Christ thy Sonne. Amen.

CHAP. LVI.

*That we ought to deny our selves,
and imitate Christ by the
Crosse.*

CHRIST. Sonne, look how much thou canst go out of thy self, so much maist thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of externall things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of ourselves inwardly, joyneth us to God. I will have thee learn the perfect deniall of thy self in my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living.

living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow; the truth which thou oughtest to trust; the life for which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life which cannot end. I am the most strait way, the supreme truth, the true life, yea a blessed life, an uncreated life. If thou remain in my way, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall deliver thee, and thou shalt lay hold on everlasting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: if thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all. If thou wilt be my Disciple, deny thy self. If thou wilt possesse a blessed life, despise this present life. If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy self upon earth. If thou wilt reigne with me, bear the crosse with me. For onely the servants of the crosse find the way of blisse and true light.

3. CHRISTIAN. Lord

Jesus, forasmuch as thy way is narrow and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in suffering worldly contempt. For the servant is not greater then his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master. Let thy servant be exercised in thy holy life, for therein my salvation and the true holinesse doth consist: whatsoever I reade or hear besides it, doth not recreate or delight me fully,

4. CHRIST. Sonne, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou fulfill them. He that hath my commandments, & keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and I will love him, & will manifest my self unto him, & will make him sit with me in the Kingdom of my Father.

CHRISTIAN. Lord Jesus, as thou hast said and promised, so give me grace to obtain the favour, that it be fulfilled. I have received the crosse,

croffe, I have received it from thy hand; and I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good retired person is the croffe; and it is a guide to Paradise. It is now begun, it is not lawfull to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage my Brethren, and go forwards together: Jesus will be with us. For Jesus's sake we have undertaken this croffe; for Jesus's sake let us persevere in the croffe. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also will fight for us: let us follow him manfully, let none be dismayed; but be we ready to die with courage in the battel, and let us not blemish our glory by flying from the Croffe.

CHAP. LVII.

That a man be not too much dejected, when he falleth into some defects.

CH R I S T. Sonne, patience and humility in aduersities are more pleasing to me, then much comfort and devotion in prosperities. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle spoken and done against thee? Although it had been much more, thou oughtest not to have been moved. But now let it passe, it is not the first that hath happened, nor any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou live long. Thou art manly enough, as long as no aduersity happeneth. Thou canst give good counsel also, and canst strengthen others with thy words: but when any tribulation suddenly comes to thy door, thou art destitute of counsell and strength. See therefore thy great frailty, which thou often provest in every small occasion. It is notwithstanding permitted for thy good,

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good, when these and such like things befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the best thou canst, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long: bear it at least patiently, if thou canst not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and conceivest indignation thereat, yet restrain thy self, and suffer no inordinate word to pass out of thy mouth, which may be a scandal to the little ones. The storm which now is raised shall quickly be appeased, and inward grief shall be sweetned by the return of grace. I do yet live, saith the Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort then before, if thou put thy trust in me, and callest devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy self to greater suffering. All is not lost, if thou feel thy self often afflicted or grievously tempted. Thou art a man, and not God:

thou art flesh, not an Angel. How canst thou look to continue ever in the same state of virtue, when an Angel in heaven hath fallen, and also the first man in Paradise? I am he that do give healthfull comfort to them that mourn, and do raise up unto me those that know their own infirmity.

4. CHRISTIAN. Lord, blessed be thy word, more sweet unto my mouth then the hony and the hony-combe. What should I do in these my so great tribulations and anguish, unlesse thou didst comfort me with thy holy words? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at length attain to the port of salvation? Grant me a good end, grant me a happy passage out of this world. Be mindfull of me, my God, and direct me the right way to thy Kingdome. Amen.

CHAP. LVIII.

*Of not searching into high matters,
and into the secret judgements
of God.*

CHRIST. Sonne, beware thou dispute not of high matters, nor of the secret judgements of God, why this man is left, and he taken to so great grace : why also this man is so much afflicted, and he so greatly advanced. These things exceed all humane power, neither can any reason or disputation search out the judgement of God. When the Enemy therefore suggesteth these things unto thee, or some curious people enquire of thee, answer that of the Prophet, Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right. And again, The judgments of our Lord are true and justified in themselves. My judgments are to be feared, not to be discussed ; for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of man.

2. In like manner I advise thee
not

not to inquire, nor dispute of the rewards of the Saints, which of them is holier then the other, and which is greater in the Kingdome of heavē. These things oftentimes breed strife and unprofitable contentions: they nourish also pride and vain glory; from whence do spring envy and dissentions, whilst one will proudly have this preferred, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to no purpose; for I am not the God of dissention, but of peace: which peace consisteth rather in true humility; then in exalting our selves.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love these, or those most: but this love is rather humane then divine. I am he who made all the Saints, & have given them grace: I have given them glory. I know the good deeds of every one; I have prevented them in the blessings of my sweetnesse. I foreknew my beloved before the
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beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundry temptations. I have powred into them glorious comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know the first and last : I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints : I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honoured in everyone, whom I have thus gloriously exalted, and predestinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest; for that I made both the lesse and the greater : And he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdome of heaven. There all are one through the bond of Love : they think the same, they will the same,

same, and they all love as one.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more then themselves. For being ravished above themselves, and drawn out of the affection of themselves, they tend wholly unto the love of me, in whom also they do fruitively rest. Nothing can turn them back, nothing can presse them down; for being full of the eternall truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable love. Let therefore carnall and naturall men, that can affect no other but their private joyes, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They adde and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the eternall Truth.

6. There is ignorance in many, specially in those that be slenderly enlightned, and these can seldom love any with perfect spiritual love. They are alwayes much drawn by a natural affection, and humane friendship to this man or
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to that, and according to the experience they have of themselves in their earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance between the things which the imperfect ones imagine in their conceits, and those which are illuminated do see by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Sonne, that thou treat not curiously of these things, which exceed thy knowledge, but rather so apply thy endeavours, that thou maiest at least have the meanest place in the Kingdome of heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceeded others in sanctity, or is esteemed greater in the Kingdome of heaven; what would this knowledge avail him, unless he should thereby humble himself the more in my sight, and should rise up into the greater praising of my name? His labour is much more acceptable unto God, that thinketh

eth of the greatnesse of his finnes,
and the smallness of his graces,
and how far off he is from the
perfection of the Saints ; then his
that disputeth of their greatnesse
or littlenesse,

8. They are well, and right well
contented, if men could content
themselves and refrain from these
vain discourses. They glory not of
their own merits, for they ascribe
no good unto themselves, but at-
tribute all to me, who of my infi-
nite love have given them all
things. They are filled with so
great love of the Divinity, and
with such an overflowing joy, that
there is no glory nor happinesse,
that is or can be wanting unto
them. All the Saints, how much
the higher they be in glory, so
much the more humble they are
in themselves, and nearer and
dearer unto me. And therefore it
is written, That they did cast their
Crowns before God, & fell down
upon their face before the Lambe,
and

and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greatest in the Kingdome of God, that know not whether they shall ever be numbred there amongst the least. It is a great matter to be even the least in heaven, where all are great: for that all there shall be called, and shall be indeed the Sonnes of God. The least there shall become a thousand; and the sinner of an hundred years shall die. For when the Disciples asked who should be the greatest in the Kingdome of heaven, they received this answer, Unlesse you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdome of heaven: Who-soever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is greatest in the Kingdome of heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that disdain to humble themselves willingly with little children. For the
low

low gate of the Kingdome of heaven will not give them entrance. And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here: for whilest the poore enter into the Kingdome of God, they shall stand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble, and you that be poore be you glad, for yours is the Kingdome of God, if you walk according to the truth.

CHAP. LIX.

That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what trust have I in this life? Or what is the greatest comfort, that all things under heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whose mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert present? I had rather be poore for thee, then rich without thee. I rather chøose to be a pilgrime on earth with thee, then

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then to possesse heaven without thee. Where thou art, there is heaven: and there is death and hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it behoveth me to sigh and cry and pray unto thee. For I have none fully to trust in, none that can help me in time of necessity, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, and my trust; thou art my comforter, and most faithfull unto me in all things.

2. All men seek their own gain; thou onely seekest my salvation and my wellfare, and turnest all things to my good. Although thou permittest many temptations and adversities to befall me, yet thou ordainest all this to my advantage, who art wont to try thy beloved servants a thousand waies. In which triall thou oughtest no lesse to be loved and praised, then if thou didst fill me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, O Lord God,

God, I put my whole hope and refuge : in thee I place my tribulation and anguish ; for I find all to be weak and unconstant , whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many friends avail, nor strong helpers aid, nor wise counsellours give any profitable answer, nor the books of the learned comfort , nor any wealth deliver, nor any secret or pleasant place defend , if thou thy self dost not assist, help, comfort, instruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that seem to be ordained for the rest and felicity of man , when thou art absent, are nothing , and do bring indeed no felicity at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good , the height of life , the depth of wisdom : and the strongest comfort of thy servants is to trust in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes : in thee O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my trust. Bless and sanctifie
my

my soul with thy heavenly blessings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the seat of thy eternall glory: and that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy Majesty. According to the greatnesse of thy goodnesse, and multitude of thy mercies look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor servant, who is far exiled from thee in the land of the shadow of death. Protect and keep the soul of thy servant amidst so many dangers of this corruptible life, and by thy grace accompanying me, direct it in the way of peace, to the countrey of everlasting light. Amen.

THE FOURTH BOOK.

With

*A devout Exhortation unto the
blessed Sacrament.*

The voice of Christ.



Come unto me, all ye
that labour and are
burdened, and I will
refresh you, saith the
Lord. The bread
which I will give, is my flesh, for
the life of the world. Take ye and
eat, this is my body that is given
for you. Do this in remembrance
of me. He that eateth my flesh,
and drinketh my blood, dwelleth
in me, and I in him. The words
which I have spoken unto you, are
spirit and life.

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CHAP. I.

K. *With how great reverence Christ
ought to be received.*

The voice of the Disciple.

THESE are thy words, O Christ
the everlasting Truth, though
not spoken all at one time, nor
written in one and the self-same
place. Because therefore they are
thine and true, they are all thank-
fully and faithfully to be received
by me. They are thine, and thou
hast spoken them; and they are
mine also, because thou hast spo-
ken them for my salvation. I wil-
lingly receive them from thy
mouth, that they may be the deep-
er imprinted in my heart. These so
pious words, so full of sweetnesse
and love, do stirre me up; but mine
own offences do amaze me, and
my impure conscience driveth me
back from the receiving of so great
mysteries. The sweetnesse of thy
words doth encourage me, but the
multitude of my finnes doth op-
presse me.

2. Then

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee: and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting life and glory. Come, saist thou, unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and lovely word in the eare of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poore and needy to receive thy most holy body. But who am I, Lord, that I may presume to approach unto thee? behold the heavens cannot contain thee, and thou saist, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this so gracious benignity, and this so loving invitation? How shall I dare to come, that know not any good in me, whereupon I may presume? How shall I bring thee unto my house, that have so often offended thy most gracious countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honour thee, the Saints and just men

do fear thee; and thou saist, Come ye all unto me. Unlesse thou, O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unlesse thou didst command it, who would dare to come unto thee? Behold Noah a just man laboured a hundred years in the making of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few: and how can I in one hours space prepare my self to receive with reverence the Maker of the world?

4. Moses thy great servant, and especiall friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which also he covered with most pure gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a rotten creature; how shall I so lightly dare to receive the Maker of the Law, and the giver of life? Solomon the wisest of the Kings of Israel bestowed seven years in building a magnificent Temple to the praise of thy name, and celebrated the feast of the Dedication thereof eight dayes together:

ther: he offered a thousand peace-offerings, and set the Ark in the place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets, and joy; and I the most miserable and poorest of men, how shall I bring thee into my house, that can scarce spend one half houre religiously? and I would to God it were once almost one half houre in worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavour to please thee, and alas how little is that which I do! How short time do I spend, when I prepare my self to receive! I am feldome wholly recollected, very feldome free from all distraction; and yet surely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the presence of thy Deity, nor any creature draw me unto it: for I am not to harbour an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is a great difference between the Ark of the Covenant with the Reliques thereof, and

and thy most pure body with his unspeakable virtues: betwē those legall sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all ancient Sacrifices. Why therefore do I not become more zealous in thy venerable presence? Wherefore do I not prepare my self with greater care to receive thy holy things, sith those holy ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings also and Princes, with the whole people, have shewed so great zeal of devotion to thy divine service?

7. The most devout King David danced before the Ark of God with all his might, calling to mind the benefits bestowed in times past upon his Forefathers. He made Instruments of sundry kinds, he published Psalmes, and appointed them to be sung with joy: himself also oftentimes sung to the harp. Being inspired with the grace of the holy Ghost, he taught the people of Israel to praise God with

their whole heart, and with tuneable voices every day to bleſs and praise him. If ſo great devotion was then uſed, and ſuch celebrating of divine praise before the Ark of the Teſtament, what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me, and all Chriſtian people in the preſence of this Sacrament, in receiving the moſt precious body of Chriſt?

9. O God the inviſible Creatour of the world, how wonderfully doſt thou deal with us! how ſweetly and graciously doſt thou diſpoſe of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offer'eſt thy ſelf to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all underſtanding! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the religious, and inflameth their affections. For thy true faithfull ſervants that diſpoſe their whole life to amendment, by this moſt worthy Sacrament oftentimes receive great grace of devotion, and love of holineſſe.

10. O

18. O Admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithfull ones of Christ do know: but the unfaithful, and such as are slaves unto sinne, cannot have experience thereof! In this Sacrament spiritual grace is given, and lost virtue is restored in the soul, and the beauty disfigured by sin returneth again. This grace is sometimes so great, that out of the fulnesse of devotion which is here given, not onely the mind, but the weak body also feeleth great increase of strength.

11. Our coldness and negligence surely is much to be bewailed and pitied, that we are not drawn with greater affection to receive Christ, in whom all the hope and reward of those that are to be saved doth consist. For he is our sanctification and redemption; he is the comfore of passengers. and the everlasting fruition of Saints. It is much therefore to be lamented that many do so little consider this comfortable

mystery, which rejoyceth heaven, and preserveth the whole world. O the blindness and hardness of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh so unspeakable a gift; but rather cometh by the daily use thereof to regard it little or nothing.

12. For if this most holy Sacrament should be celebrated in one place onely, and consecrated by one onely Minister in the world; with how great desire dost thou think would men be affected to that place, and to such a Man of God, that they might enjoy the celebration of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Ministers, and Christ is offered in many places; that so the grace and love of God to man may appear somuch the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is diffused through the world. Thanks be unto thee good Jesus, the everlasting shepheard, that hast vouchsafed to refresh us poore and banished

nished men with thy precious body and bloud, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

CHAP. II.

*That great goodnesse and charity of
God is bestowed upon man in
this Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple.

IN confidence of thy goodness and great mercy, O Lord, being sick, I approach unto my Saviour, hungry and thirsty to the fountain of life, needy to the King of heaven, a servant unto my Lord, a creature to my Creatour, desolate to my mercifull Comforter. But whence is this to me, that thou vouchsafest to come unto me? Who am I that thou shouldest give thy self unto me? How dare a sinner

sume to appear before thee? And thou, how dost thou vouchsafe to come unto a sinner? Thou knowest thy servant, and seest that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou shouldest bestow this benefit upon him. I confesse therefore my unworthinesse, and I acknowledge thy goodnesse; I praise thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy transcendent love. For thou doest this for thine own sake, not for any merits of mine; to the end that thy goodnesse may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly shewed, and thy humility more highly commended. Since therefore it is thy pleasure, and thou hast commanded that it should be so, this thy bounty is also pleasing to me, and I do wish that my offences may be no hinderance unto it.

2. O most sweet and benigne Jesus, how great reverence and thanks, with perpetual praise, is due

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due unto thee for the receiving of thy sacred body, whose dignity no man is able to expresse ! But what shall I think of at this Communion, now that I am to approach unto my Lord, whom I am not able duely to honour, and yet I desire to receive him with devotion ? What can I think better, and more profitable then to humble my self wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodness above me ? I praise thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever : and I do despise, and submit my self unto thee, even into the depth of my unworthiness.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies and I the skum of sinners ! Behold thou bowest thy self down unto me, who am not worthy so much as to look up unto thee ! Behold thou comest unto me ! it is thy will to be with me, thou invitest me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no

other truly then thy self, the living bread, that descendest from heaven, and givest life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence doth this love proceed! what kind of favour is this which shineth upon me! How great thanks and praises are due unto thee for these benefits! O how good and profitable was thy counsel, when thou ordainedst it! How sweet and pleasant the banquet, when thou gavest thy self to be our food! How wonderfull thy work, O Lord, how powerfull thy virtue, how unspeakable thy truth! For thou saidst the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandest.

5. A thing of great admiration, that thou, my Lord God, true God and Man, shouldest be exhibited unto us by the elements of bread and wine. Thou who art the Lord of all things, and standest in need of none, hast pleased to dwell in us

by

by means of this thy Sacrament :
preserve my heart and body un-
spotted, that with a chearfull and
pure conscience I may often cele-
brate thy mysteries , and receive
them to my everlasting health ;
which thou hast chiefly ordained
and instituted for thy honour,
and for perpetuall memoriall.

6. Rejoyce, O my soul, and give
thanks unto God for so noble a
gift, and so singular a comfort left
unto thee in this vale of tears. For
as often as thou callest to mind
this mystery, and receivest the bo-
dy of Christ? so often dost thou re-
member the work of thy redem-
ption, and art made partaker of all
the merits of Christ. For the love
of Christ is never diminished, and
the greatnesse of his propitiation
is never exhausted. Therefore thou
oughtest alwayes to dispose thy
self hereunto by a fresh renewing
of thy mind, and to weigh with at-
tentive consideration this great
mystery of thy salvation. So great,
new,

new, and joyfull it ought to seem unto thee, when thou comest to these holy mysteries; as if the same day Christ first descending into the wombe of the Virgin, were become man; or hanging on the cross did suffer and die for the salvation of mankind.

CHAP. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

The voice of the Disciple.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O God, hast prepared in thy goodnesse for the poore. Behold in thee is all whatsoever I can or ought to desire: thou art my health and my redemption, my hope and my strength, my honour and my glory. Make joyfull therefore this day
the

the soul of thy servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee, O Lord Jesus. I desire to receive thee now with devotion, and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my house, that with Zacheus I may obtain to be blessed by thee, and to be numbered amongst the children of Abraham. My soul thirsteth to receive thy body, my heart desireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth. For besides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy visitation. And therefore I must often come unto thee, and receive thee as the remedy of my health; lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy heavenly food. For so, most merciful Jesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people and curing sundry diseases, I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way. Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave
thy

thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithfull. For thou art the sweet refection of the soul, and he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker and heir of everlasting glory. It is necessary for me, that do so often fall and sinne, so quickly wax dull and faint, that by often prayers and confession, and receiving of thy holy body, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self; lest perhaps by long abstaining I fall from my holy purpose.

3. For the imaginations of man are prone unto evil from his youth, and unlesse some divine remedy help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil, and strengtheneth in good. For if I be now so often slack and negligent when I communicate, or celebrate, what would become of me if I received not this remedy, and sought not after so great help? Though every day I be not fit, nor well prepared to communicate, I
will

will endeavour notwithstanding at due times to receive the divine mysteries, and to be partaker of so great a grace. For this is the onely chief comfort of a faithfull soul, whilst she wandereth from thee in this mortal body, that being often mindfull of her God, she receive her Beloved with a devout mind.

4. O the wonderfull condescent of thy mercy, that thou O Lord God, the Creatour and giver of life to all spirits, dost vouchsafe to come unto a poor soul, and with thy whole Deity and Humanity to replenish her hunger! O happy mind and blessed soul, that is vouchsafed to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with spiritual joy! O how great a Lord doth she entertain! How beloved a guest doth she harbour! how pleasant a companion doth she receive! how faithfull a friend doth she take in! how lovely and noble

noble a spouse doth she embrace!
 She embraceth him who is to be
 loved above all that is beloved, &
 above all things that may be de-
 sired. Let heaven and earth and all
 their furniture be silent in thy pre-
 sence. For what beauty and praise
 soever they have, it is received
 from thy bounty, and shall not
 equall the beauty of thy name,
 whose wisdom is infinite.

CHAP. IV.

*That many benefits are bestowed
 upon them that communicate
 devoutly.*

The voice of the Disciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy ser-
 vant with the blessings of thy
 sweetnesse, that I may obtain fa-
 vour to approach worthily and de-
 voutly to thy glorious Sacrament:
 stirre up my heart unto thee, and
 deliver me from all dullness: visit
 me with thy salvation, that I may
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taste in spirit thy sweetness, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain. Give light also to my eyes to behold so great a mystery, and strengthen me to believe it with undoubted faith. For it is thy work, and not mans power; thy sacred institution, not mans invention. For no man is of himself able to comprehend and understand these things, which surpass the understanding even of Angels. What therefore shall I unworthy sinner, dust and ashes, be able to search and comprehend of so high and sacred mystery?

2. O Lord in simplicity of heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do verily believe that thou art here present in the Sacrament. Thy will is, that I receive thee, and by love do unite my self unto thee. Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and do crave thy speciall grace, that so I may wholly melt and flow
over

over with love into thee and hereafter never admit any externall comfort. For this most high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the soul and body, the remedy of all spirituall weaknes: by it my vices are cured, my passions bridled, temptations overcome or weakned, greater grace is infused, virtue begun increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened, & love inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow, many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved that communicate devoutly, O my God, the Protector of my soul, the strengthener of humane frailty, and the giver of all inward comfort. Thou impartest unto them much comfort against sundry tribulations, and liftest them up from the depth of their own dejectedness, to the hope of thy protection, and dost inwardly refresh and illustrate them with new grace, in such sort, that they

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who before Communion felt themselves heavy and indisposed, afterwards being strengthened with heavenly meat and drink, do find in themselves a great change to the better. Which thou dost so dispose to thy elect, that they may truly acknowledge, and patiently prove how great their own infirmity is, and what goodness and grace they receive from thee. For they of themselves are cold, dull, and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, cheerfull, and full of devotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of sweetnesse, doth not carry away from thence at least some little sweetnesse? Or who standing by a great fire, receiveth not some small heat thereby? Thou art a fountain alwayes full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw at the full out of this fountain, nor drink my fill, I will notwithstanding

ing set my lips to the mouth of this heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at least some small drop to refresh my thirst ; to the end I be not wholly dried up. And though I be not altogether heavenly, nor so inflamed as the Cherubins and Seraphins, notwithstanding I will endeavour to apply myself to devotion, and prepare my heart to obtain some small spark of divine fire, by humble receiving of this enlivening Sacrament. And whatsoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Jesus, most holy Saviour, do thou supply for me, most bountifull and gracious Lord, who hast vouchsafed to call us unto thee, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I labour in the sweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am burdened with sinnes, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppressed with
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many evil passions, and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit my self, and all mine, that thou maist keep me, & bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honour and glory of thy name, who hast prepared thy Body and Bloud to be my meat and my drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, my zeal and devotion may increase.

CHAP. V.

*Of the dignity of this Sacrament,
and Ministerial function.*

The voice of Christ.

IF thou hadst angelical purity,
and the sanctity of S. John Baptist,
thou wert not worthy to receive this Sacrament. For it is not within the compasse of the deserts of men, that man should consecrate
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the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great is the dignity of the Ministers of God, to whom is granted that which is not given to the Angels. It is proper for Ministers alone rightly instituted in the Church to have power to celebrate, and consecrate the body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, using the words of God, by Gods commandment and appointment; but God is there the principal Author, and invisible Worker, to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore more to believe God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, then thine own sense, or any visible signe. And therefore thou art to come unto this Mystery with fear and reverence. Consider attentively with thy self, and see what that is, whereof the Ministry is
deli-

delivered unto thee by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop. Behold thou art made a Priest, and consecrated to celebrate : see how that in due time thou doest this faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy self so, as thou maist be without reproof. Thou hast not lightened thy burden, but art now bound with a straiter band of discipline, and art obliged to more perfect degree of sanctity. A Minister ought to be adorned with all graces, and to give example of good life to others. His conversation should not be according to the ordinary and common course of men, but like to the Angels in heaven, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Minister is the Vicegerent of Christ; to pray humbly with a prostrate mind unto God for himself and the whole people. Neither ought he to cease from prayer till he obtain grace and mercy. When a Minister doth celebrate, he honoureth

nourisheth God, rejoiceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living, and maketh himself partaker of all good.

CHAP. VI.

*An Interrogation of the exercise
before Communion.*

The voice of the Disciple.

WHEN I weigh thy greatness, O Lord, and my unworthinesse, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I flie from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self, I incur thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do my God, my helper, and my counsellor in necessity?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some exercise suitable to this holy Communion. For it is good for me to know, how I should reverently and devoutly prepare my heart for thee, for the profitable

IV. Chap. 7. *Pattern.* 347
An- table, receiving of thy Sacrament,
beth or for the celebrating of so great
nself and divine a Sacrifice.

CHAP. VII.

rise of the discussing of our own consci-
ence, and purpose of amend-
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The voice of the Beloved.

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ABove all things, the Minister
of God ought to come to cele-
brate, and receive this Sacrament
with great humility of heart, and
lowly reverence, with a full faith,
and a pious intending of the ho-
nour of God. Examine diligently
thy conscience, and to thy power
purge and cleanse it with true con-
trition and humble confession: so
as there may be nothing in thee,
that may be burdensome unto
thee, or that may breed in thee
remorse of conscience, and hinder
thy free access. Repent thee of all
thy sinnes in generall, and in par-
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ticular bewail thy daily offences. And if thou hast time, confesse unto God in the secret of thy heart, all the miseries of thy [disordered] passions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so carnall, so worldly, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchfull over thy outward senses, so often intangled with many vain fantasies; so vehemently inclined to outward things, so negligent in the interiour; so prone to laughter and immodesty, so hard to tears and compunction; so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to strictnesse of life and zeal; so curious to hear news and see glorious sights, so slack to embrace what is humble and low; so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast in keeping; so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence, so loose in manners, so importune in action. so greedy to meat, so deaf

to the word of God, so hasty to rest, so slow to labour, so watchful to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so cold in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating [the Communion,] so dry in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldome wholly gathered into thy self, so suddenly moved to anger, so apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyfull in prosperity, so weak in adversity, so often proposing much good, and performing little.

3. These and other thy defects confessed, and bewailed with sorrow, and great dislike of thine own infirmity, make a firm purpose alwayes to amend thy life and to go forward in virtue. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole will offer thy self up to the honour of my name, a perpetual sacrifice on the altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and soul un-

to me, that so thou maiſt alſo obtain favour to come worthily to offer ſacrifice unto God, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For there is in man no oblation more worthy, nor greater, for the purging away of finnes, then to offer up our ſelves unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a man ſhall have done what lieth in him, and ſhall be truly penitent, and ſhall come to me for pardon and grace, as I live, ſaith the Lord, who will not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he be converted and live, I will not remember his finnes any more, but they ſhall be all forgiven him, and fully pardoned.

CHAP. VII.

*of the oblation of Christ on the
Crosse, and resignation of
our selves.*

The voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up my self
unto God my Father, with my
hands stretched forth on the Crosse,
and my body naked, for thy sins,
so that nothing remained in me
that was not turned into a sacri-
fice for the appeasing of the divine
Majesty: so oughtest thou also to
offer up thy self willingly unto me
daily, as a pure and holy oblation,
with all thy might and affections,
in as hearty a manner as thou
canst. What do I require of thee
more, then that thou entirely re-
signe thy self unto me? Whatsoever
thou givest besides thy self, is of
little account in my sight; for I
seek not thy gift, but thee.

2. As it would not suffice thee to
have all things whatsoever, besides
me; so neither can it please me

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whatsoever thou givest, if thou offerest not up thy self. Offer thy self unto me, and give thy self wholly for God, and thy offering shall be gratefull. Behold I offered up my self wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body & bloud for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abidest in thy self, and dost not offer thy self up freely unto my will, thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy self into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedome and grace. For this cause so few become inwardly free and illuminated, for that they do not resolve wholly to deny themselves. My saying is undoubtedly true. Unlesse a man forsake all, he cannot be my Disciple. If thou therefore wish to be my Disciple, offer up thy self unto me with thy whole affections.

C H A P.

CHAP. IX.

*That we ought to offer up our selves,
and all that is ours unto God,
and to pray for all.*

The voice of the Disciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things,
that are in heaven, & in earth. I
desire to offer up my self unto
thee, as a free oblation, and to re-
main alwayes thine. O Lord, in the
simplicity of my heart I offer my
self unto thee this day, for a sacri-
fice of perpetual praise, to be thy
servant for ever. Receive me with
this holy oblation of thy precious
body, which in the presence of the
Angels, invisibly attending here, I
offer up this day unto thee, that it
may be for my good, and the good
of all thy people.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord,
all my finnes and offences, which
I have committed in the sight of
thee, and thy holy Angels, from
the day wherein I first could sinne,
to this houre, upon thy mercifull

altar: that thou maist consume and burn them all with the fire of thy charity, and wash out all the stains of my finnes, and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me again thy grace, which I lost by sinne, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kisse of peace.

3. What can I do with my finnes, but humbly confesse and bewail them, and intreat alwayes thy favour? I beseech thee, hear me graciously, when I stand before thee my God. All my finnes are very displeasing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I am sorry, and will be sorry for them as long as I live, and am ready to repent, and according to my utmost power to please thee. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my finnes for thy holy names sake: save my soul which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious bloud. Behold I commit my self unto thy mercy, I resigne my self over into thy hands.

and thy hands. Do with me according to thy goodnesse, not according to my wickednesse and iniquity.

4. I offer up also unto thee all whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maist amend and sanctifie it, that thou maist make it grateful and acceptable unto thee; and alwayes perfect it more and more; and bring me also, who am a slothfull and unprofitable creature, to a good & blessed end.

5. I offer up also unto thee all the godly desires of pious persons, the necessities of parents, friends, brethren sisters, and of all those that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my self or to others for thy love, and that have desired and begd of me to pray for them, and all theirs: that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee. Q 5 6. I

6. I offer up also unto thee my prayers , especially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or slandered me, or have done me any damage or displeasure, and for those also, whom I have at any time sadded, troubled, grieved, and scandalized by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares : that it may please thee to forgive us all our finnes and offences ; one against another. Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealousie , indignation, wrath, and contention , and whatsoever may hurt Charity, and weaken brotherly love. Have mercy. O Lord, have mercy on those that crave thy mercy : give grace unto them that stand in need thereof, and grant that we may be meet to enjoy thy grace , and attain to life everlasting, Amen.

CHAP. X.

*That the holy Communion is not
lightly to be forborn.*

The voice of the Beloved,

THOU oughtest often to have recourse to the Fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the Fountain of goodnesse and of all benignity; that thou maist be cured of thy finnes and passions, and be made more strong and vigilant against all temptations and deceits of the Devil. The enemy knowing greatest profit and remedy to consist in the holy Communion, endeavoureth by all means and occasions to withdraw and hinder faithfull and devout persons from it.

2. Some when they purpose to sit themselves for the holy Communion, suffer greatest assaults of the Devil. For that wicked spirit (as it is written in Job) cometh amongst the Sonnes of God, to trouble them with his accustomed malice, or to make them over fearful

full and perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtle assaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether forbear the Communion, or at least come unto it coldly. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and suggestions, be they never so filthy and hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughtest to contemne and scorn him a miserable wretch, and not to omit the holy Communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining of devotion, and some anxiety about making thy confession hindereth thee. Follow in these occasions the counsel of the wise, and put away all doubt and scruple; for it hindreth the grace of God, and overthroweth the devotion of the mind. For every small vexation and trouble omit not the holy Sacrament, but go the sooner to confess thy sins, and

and willingly forgive others whatsoever offences they have done against thee : and if thou hast offended any , humbly crave pardon , and God will willingly forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay long the confession of thy finnes, and to deferre the holy Communion ? Purge thy self with speed, spit out the venome presently, make haste to take a remedy, and thou shalt find it better, then if thou deferredst it long. If thou omittest it to day for this cause, perhaps to morrow some greater will fall out; and so thou maist be hindred a long time from these divine mysteries, and become more unfit. Shake off from thy self all present heavinesse and sloth with the greatest speed thou canst. For it profiteth nothing to continue long in disquietnesse and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments to withdraw thy self from the divine mysteries. Yea it
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is very prejudiciall to deferre Communion long, for it is wont to breed a great disease. Alas, some cold and delicate people do willingly delay confession and defer the sacred Communion, lest they should be bound to greater watch over themselves.

5. O how little charity and weak devotion have they that so easily omit the holy Communion! How happy is he and acceptable to God, who ordereth so his life, and keepeth his conscience in such purity, that he may be ready and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient and might be done without note. If any one sometimes abstain of humility, or by reason of some lawfull impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedeth of coldnesse, he must stirre himself up, and do what lieth in him, and God will assist his desire for the good will he hath thereto, which

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which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawful hinderance doth happen, he must alwaies have yet that good will, and a pious intention to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament. For every good man may every day and houre profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually : and yet on certain dayes, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with an affectionate reverence the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honour and glory of God, then his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and is invisibly fed, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the mystery of the Incarnation, and the Passion of Christ, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himself, but when a Feast draweth near, & when custome compelleth him thereunto, shall often be unprepared. Blessed is he that offereth him-

himself up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long, nor too short in celebrating, but keep the accustomed manner of those with whom thou livest. Thou oughtest not to be tedious and troublesome to others, but to observe the common course according to the appointment of thy Superiours: and rather frame thy self to the profit of others, then to thine own devotion or desire.

CHAP. XI.

That the body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithfull soul.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Sweetest Lord Jesus, how great sweetnesse hath an holy soul that feasteth with thee in thy banquet, where there is set no other food to be eaten but thy self, her onely beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart! And verily it would be a
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swet thing unto me to poure out
tears from the bottome of my
heart in thy presence, and with
holy Magdalene to wash thy feet
with my tears. But where is this
devotion? Where is so plentiful
shedding of holy tears? Surely in
the sight of thee and thy holy An-
gels, my whole heart should be in-
flamed and dissolve into tears for
joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacra-
ment truly present, though hidden
under another representation.

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2. For to behold thee in thine
own divine brightnesse, mine eyes
would not be able to endure it,
neither could the whole world
stand in the brightnesse of the
glory of thy Majesty. I do really
enjoy and adore him, whom the
Angels adore in heaven; but I, as
yet in the mean time, by faith, they
by sight, and without a shadow. I
ought to be content with the light
of true faith, and to walk therein,
until the day of everlasting bright-
nesse break forth, and the shadows
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of figures passe away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. For the blessed in heavenly glory need not the remedy of Sacraments, who rejoyce without end in the presence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed by his brightnesse into the brightnesse of the incomprehensible Deity: they taste the Word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whilest I mind these wonderful things, even all spiritual comfort whatsoever becometh tedious unto me: for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account of whatsoever I see or hear in this world. Thou art my witnesse, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this is not possible whilst I remain in this mortal life.

life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires. For thy Saints also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdome of heaven, whilst they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe: what they hoped for, I expect: whether they are come, I trust I shall come by thy grace. In the meantime, I will go forward in faith, strengthened by the examples of the Saints: I have also good books for my comfort and for the glasse of my life; and above all these, thy most holy Body for a singular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive two things to be chiefly necessary for me in this life, without which this miserable life would be unsupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this body, I acknowledge in self to stand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast there-

therefore given unto me a weak creature, thy sacred Body for the refecti^on of my soul and body; and hast set thy word as a light unto my feet: without these two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the soul, and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. These also may be called the two Tables set on the one side and the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the holy table, having the holy bread, that is, the precious body of Christ: the other is of the divine law, containing holy doctrine, teaching the true faith, and certainly leading to that within the veil, where is the Holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord Jesus, the light of everlasting light, for the table of holy doctrine, which thou hast afforded us by thy servants, the Prophets and Apostles, and other Teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creatour and redeemer of man, who to manifest thy charity to the whole world,

world, hast prepared a great supper, wherein thou hast set before us to be eaten, not the typicall Lambe, but thine own most sacred Body and Bloud, rejoycing al the faithfull with thy holy banquet, & replenishing them to the full with thy healthfull Cup in which are all the delights of Paradise; and the holy Angels do feast with us. but with a more happy sweetness.

6. O how great and honourable is the office of Gods Ministers, to whom it is given with sacred words to consecrate the Lord of glory, with their lips to blesse him, with their hands to hold him, with their mouth to receive him, & to administer him to others! O how clean ought to be those hands; how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unspotted that heart, inwhom the Authour of purity so often entreth! Nothing but what is holy, no word but chaste and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. Simple

7. Simple and chaste ought to be the eyes that are wont to behold the body of Christ; the hands pure and lifted up to heaven, that use to handle the Creator of heaven and earth. Unto the Priests especially it is said in the Law, Be ye holy, for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Assist us, Almighty God with thy grace, that we, who have undertaken the office of Priesthood, may serve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a good conscience. And if we cannot live in so great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithstanding in due manner to bewail the finnes which we have committed; and in the spirit of humility and good intention to serve thee hereafter more fervently.

CHAP. XII.

*That he who is to communicate
ought to prepare himself with
great diligence.*

The voice of the Beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the
giver of all sanctity. I seek a pure
heart, and there is the place of my
rest. Make ready and adorn for
me the great chamber, and I will
keep with thee the Passeeover a-
mongst my Disciples. If thou wilt
have me come unto thee, and re-
main with thee, purge out the old
leaven, and make clean the habi-
tation of thy heart: shut out the
whole world, and all the throng of
sinnes. Sit like a sparrow solitary
upon the house-top, and think of
thy offences in the bitterness of
thy soul. For every lover prepa-
reth the best and fairest room for
his beloved: and herein is known
the affection of him that enter-
taineth his beloved.

2. Know

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the merit of no acti^on of thine is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thyself a whole year together, and think on nothing else. Thou art of my mere grace and favour suffered to come to my table, like a begger invited to dinner to a rich man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself, and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custome, nor for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and affection, receive the body of thy beloved Lord God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee. I have commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee: come and receive me.

3. When I bestow the grace of devotion, give thanks to God; for it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but because I have

have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather feel thy self dry, continue in prayer, sigh & knock, and give not over untill thou deserv to receive soue crum or drop of grace. Thou hast need of me, not I of thee, neither comest thou to sanctifie me, but I come to sanctifie and make thee better. Thou comest that thou maist be sanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou maist receive new grace, and be stirred up again to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved in-
to thy soul.

4. But thou oughtest not onely to prepare thy self to devotion before Communion, but carefully also to conserve thy self therein, after thou hast received the Sacrament. Neither is the carefull guard of thy self after lesse required, then devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the best preparation again

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for the obtaining of greater grace, because that a man becometh therefore very indisposed, if he presently poure himself out over much to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in some secret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou hast him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughtest wholly to give thy self, that so thou maist live hereafter, not in thy self, but in me, without all solicitude.

CHAP. XIII.

*That a devout soul ought to desire
with her whole heart, to be
united unto Christ in the
Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple,

HOW may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, & enjoy thee as my soul desireth! And that no man may look upon me nor any creature move me or respect me, but thou alone maist speak unto me, and I to thee, as
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the beloved is wont to speak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I desire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and more and more, by sacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to relish heavenly and eternall things. O Lord God, when shall I be wholly united and obsopt by thee, and be altogether forgetfull of my self! thou in me, and I in thee, and so grant us both to continue in one.

1. Thou art truly my beloved, the choicest amongst thousands, in whom my soul is well pleased to dwell all the days of her life. Thou art indeed my peacemaker, in whom is greatest peace, & true rest, without whom is labour & sorrow, and infinite misery. Thou art indeed a hidden God, & thy counsell is not with the wicked, but thy speech is with the humble and simple of heart. O Lord, how sweet

is thy spirit, who to the end thou mightest shew thy sweetnesse towards thy children, vouchsafest to feed them with the bread which descendeth from heaven, and is full of all sweetnesse! Surely there is no other Nation so great, that hath God nigh unto them, as thou our God art present to all thy faithfull, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the lifting up of their hearts to heaven, thou givest thy self to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other nation is there so famous, as the Christian people? or what creature under heaven so beloved, as a religious soul, to whom God himself cometh to feed her with his glorious flesh? O unspeakable grace: O admirable favour! O infinite love singularly bestowed upon man! But what shall I give unto the Lord in return of this grace, for so eminent a charity? There is no other thing more gratefull that I am able to
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give, then to give my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it most inwardly unto him. Then shall all my inward parts rejoyce, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me; If thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord to remain with me, and I will gladly be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto thee.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.

The voice of the Disciple.

O How great is thy sweetnesse, O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! When I remember some devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord with greatest devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded, and blush within my self that I come so formally and coldly to thy Table

of the holy Communion, that I remain so dry, and without heart-affection, that I am not wholly inflamed in thy presence, my God, nor so earnestly drawn and affected, as many devout persons have been, who out of a vehement desire of the Communion, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themselves from weeping, but with the desire both of soul and body, they earnestly longed after thee, O God, the living Fountain, being not otherwise able to alay nor satisfy their hunger, but by receiving thy body with all joy and spirituall greedinesse.

2. O the most ardent faith of those persons! a probable argument of thy sacred presence. For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so mightily within them, whilst thou, O blessed Jesus, walkest with them. Such desire and devotion, so vehement love and fervency, is often-

ostentimes farre from me. Be merciful unto me good Iesus, sweet and gracious Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feel sometimes, at least in this holy Communion, a little cordial desire of thy love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodnesse increased, and that my charity once perfectly enflamed, after the tasting of heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me most graciously with the spirit of fervour, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so especially devoted unto thee: yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

CHAP. XV.

That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

THOU oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently & confidently, to receive it joyfully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the term and manner of this heavenly visitation to God, untill it shall be his pleasure to come. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately. God often giveth in a short moment, that which he hath long time denied: he giveth sometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be alwayes presently given, and at hand ever with a wish be born, the weak man could

could not well bear it. Therefore devotion is to be expected with good hope, and humble patience; yet impute it to thy self, and thy finnes, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken away. It is sometimes a small matter that hindereth and hideth grace [from us,] if yet it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou from thy whole heart givest thy self to God, and seekest not this, nor that, for thine own pleasure or will, but settlest thy self wholly in him, thou shalt find thy self united and quiet. For nothing will relish so well, and please thee so much, as the good pleasure of the divine will. Whosoever therefore, with a single heart listeth up his intention to God, and purgeth himself from all inordinate love

or dislike of any created thing, shall be most fit to receive grace, and worthy of the gift of devotion: for the Lord bestoweth his blessings there, where he findeth the vessels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forsaketh these low things, & the more he dieth to himself by contempt of himself; so much the more speedily grace cometh, entreth in more plentifully, & lifteth up the heart that is free, to a higher state.

4. Then shall he see, and abound, and wonder, and his heart shall be enlarged within him, because the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath put himself wholly into his hand for ever. Behold, so shall the man be blessed, that seeketh God with his whole heart, and busieth not his soul in vain. This man obtaineth great grace of divine union, in receiving the holy Eucharist, for that he respecteth not his own devotion & comfort, but above all devotion and comfort, the honour and glory of God. **CHAP.**

CHAP. XVI.

That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet, and loving Lord, whom I now desire to receive devoutly, thou knowest my infirmity, and the necessity which I endure, with how many sins I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedy, I crave of thee comfort, and the ease of my pain, I speak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my inward parts are open, & who can onely perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what good things I stand in most need of, and how poor I am in virtues.

2. Behold, I stand before thee poor and naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy. Refresh thy hungry beggar, inflame my coldness, with the fire of thy love: enlighten my blindness with the bright-

brightnesse of thy presence. Turn all earthly things to me into bitterness, all things grievous and contrary into patience, all low and created things into contempt and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon earth. Be thou onely sweet unto me from henceforth for evermore: for thou onely art my meat and my drink, my love and my joy, my delight and all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldst wholly inflame, burn and change me into thee, that I might be made one spirit with thee by the grace of inward unio, & by the melting of ardent love! Suffer me not to go from thee hungry & dry, but deal mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvel if I should be wholly enflamed by thee, and die in my self, sith thou art fire alwayes burning and never decaying, love purifying

fyng the heart, and enlightning
the understanding?

CHAP. XVII.

*Of fervent love and vehement de-
sire to receive Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

W Ith great devotion and ar-
dent love, with most hearty
affection & fervour I desire to re-
ceive thee, O Lord, as many Saints
and devout persons have desired
thee, when they received thy Sa-
crament, who were most pleasing
unto thee in holinesse of life, and
most fervent in devotion. O my
God, my everlasting love, my
whole good, my happines without
end, I would gladly receive thee
with the most vehement desire,
and most worthy reverence, that
any of the Saints ever had, or
could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy
to have all those feelings of devo-
tion, yet I offer unto thee the
whole affection of my heart, as if
I alone had all those most sweet in-
flamed

flamed desire: yea and whatsoever also an holy man can conceive & desire, all that with greatest reverence, and most inward affection, I offer and present unto thee. I wish to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee, my Lord God, my Creatour, and my Redeemer. I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise and honour, with such gratitude, worthinesse, and love, with such faith, hope, and purity, as thy most blessed Mother the glorious Virgin Mary received, and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the mystery of the Incarnation, and said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.

3. And as thy blessed Forerunner, the most excellent amongst the Saints, **Iohn Baptist**, chearfully leaped

leaped in the joy of the holy Ghost, whilst he was yet shut up in his mothers wombe: and afterwards seeing Iesus walking amongst men, humbling him self very much, said with devout affection, The friend of the Bridegroom that standeth and heareth him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom: so I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer my self up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer also and present unto thee the joyes, fervent desires, mental excesses supernal illuminations, and heavenly visions of all devout hearts, with all the virtues and praises celebrated and to be celebrated, by all creatures in heaven and earth, for my self, and all such as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maist be worthily praised and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, my wishes and desires of giving thee
infi-

infinite praise & thanks, which according to the measure of thy unspeakable greatnesse, are worthily due unto thee. These I yield thee, and desire to yield thee every day and moment, I do entreat and invite all heavenly spirits, and all thy devout servants, to give thanks and praises together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praise thee, and magnifie thy holy & sweet name with great joy, and fervent devotion; and let all that reverently and devoutly celebrate thy most high Sacrament and receive it with full faith, find grace and mercy at thy hands, and pray humbly for me a sinfull creature. And when they shall have obtained their desired devotion and joyfull union, and depart from thy sacred heavenly Table, well comforted and marvellously refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember my poore soul.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

*That man be not a curious searcher
of this Sacrament, but an
humble follower of Christ
submitting his sense
to faith.*

The voice of the Beloved.

THOU oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not sink into the depth of doubt. He that is a searcher of Majesty, shall be oppressed by the glory. God is able to work more then man can understand. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so it be alwaies ready to be taught, and do endeavour to walk in the sound doctrines of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicity, that forsaketh the difficult wayes of questions, & goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion, whilest they would search after high things. Faith and
fin-

sincere life are required at thy hands, not height of understanding, nor the depth of the mysteries of God. If thou dost not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy sense be subject to faith; and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in that degree as shall be profitable and necessary for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about faith and the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the enemy. Do not regard nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts cast in by the Devill: but believe the words of God, believe his Prophets, and the wicked Enemy will flie from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the servant of God to suffer such things. For the Devil tempteth not unbelievers and sinners,

ners, whom he already securely possesseth, but he sundry wayes tempteth and vexeth the faithfull and devout.

4. Go forward therefore with a sincere and undoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament with unfeigned reverence. And whatsoever thou art not able to understand, commit securely to Almighty God. God deceiveth thee not: he is deceived that trusteth too much to himself. God walketh with the simple, revealeth himself to the humble, giveth understanding to little ones, openeth the sense to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and naturall search ought to follow faith, not to go before it, nor infringe it. For faith & love do here chiefly excell, and work in a hidden manner in this most blessed and excellent Sacrament.

crament. God, who is everlasting, and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in heaven and in earth, and there is no searching out of his wonderfull works. If the works of God were such, as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderfull and unspeakable.

F I N I S.



Luke 9. 23.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Crosse daily, and follow me.

John 14. 6.

I am the way, and the Truth, and the Life.

Phil. 2. 5.

Let the same mind be in you, which was in Christ Iesus.

1 Pet. 2. 21.

Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.

1 Iohn 2. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Chap. 3. 7.

Little children, let no man deceive you; He that doth righteousness, is righteous even as he is righteous.

Chap. 4. 17.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldnesse at the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world.

Revel,

Revel. 14. 4.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

2. Cor. 3. 18.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glasse the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Rom. 13. 14.

Put ye on the Lord Iesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fullfill the lusts thereof.

Ephes. 4. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24.

But ye have not so learned Christ: If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Iesus. That ye put off concerning the former conversation; the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitfull lusts: And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holinesse

S. Bernard.

Christum sequendo citius apprehendes, quàm legendo.

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